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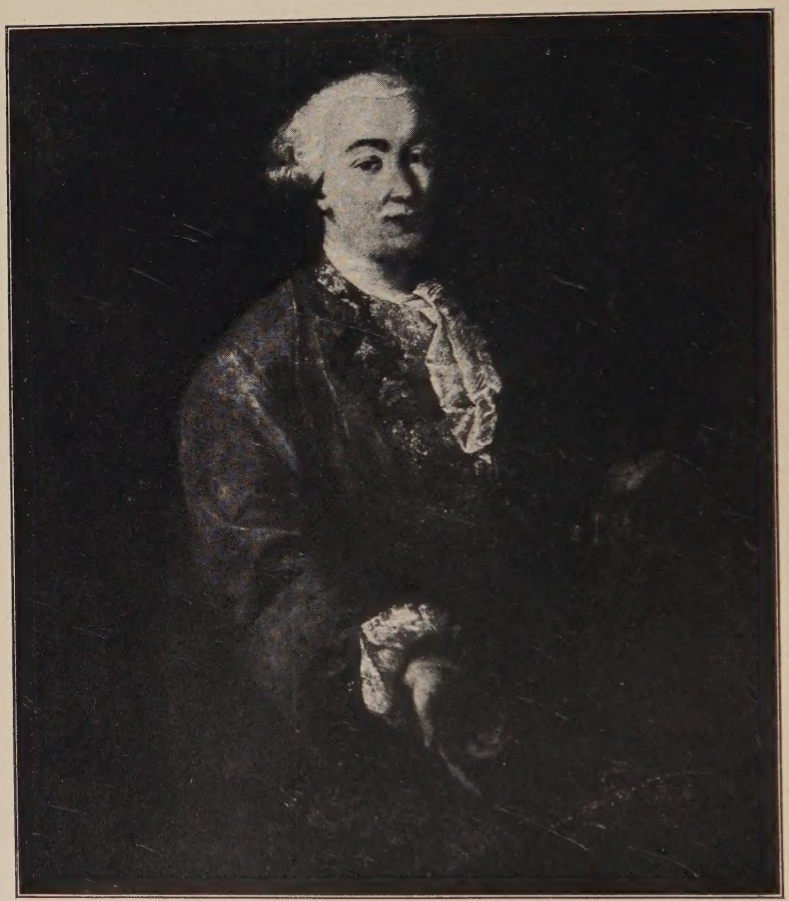
GOLDONI

A BIOGRAPHY



CARLO GOLDONI

Portrait by Alessandro Longhi

Museo Correr

GOLDONI

A BIOGRAPHY

BY

H. C. CHATFIELD-TAYLOR, LITT. D.

Author of Molière: A Biography, etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS FROM THE PAINTINGS OF
PIETRO and ALESSANDRO LONGHI

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TO

BRANDER MATTHEWS

IN APPRECIATION OF GENEROUS
FRIENDSHIP

GOLDONI

The sonnet written by Robert Browning for the album of the committee of the Goldoni Monument, erected in Venice in 1883.

Goldoni—good, gay, sunniest of souls,—
Glassing half Venice in that verse of thine,—
What though it just reflect the shade and shine
Of common life, nor render, as it rolls,
Grandeur and gloom? Sufficient for thy shoals
Was Carnival; Parini's depths enshrine
Secrets unsuited to that opaline
Surface of things which laughs along thy scrolls.

There throng the people: how they come and go,
Lisp the soft language, flaunt the bright garb,—see,—
On Piazza, Calle, under Portico
And over Bridge! Dear king of Comedy,
Be honoured! thou that didst love Venice so,—
Venice, and we who love her, all love thee!

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* Attributed by Signor Aldo Ravà, in his *Pietro Longhi,* to the manner of Longhi, rather than to the Master himself.

PREFACE

Five years ago, the Chevalier Guido Sabetta, then Italian consul in Chicago, urged me to write as a companion volume to *Molière: A Biography,* a life of Carlo Goldoni, the "Molière of Italy." More to gratify the patriotism of my friend than from any predilection for the task, I began to read the comedies of this Venetian dramatist of the eighteenth century; my work had not progressed far, however, before I became grateful to Signor Sabetta for having pressed upon me with Italian fervour the subject of a book, Goldoni being, as I soon discovered, a genius of the stage to whom the English world of letters has paid scant honour. Indeed, that very sobriquet, the "Molière of Italy," has sorely blinded non-Italian eyes to his originality, his dramatic naturalism being peculiarly his own, and his genius quite distinct from that of *Le Grand Comique.* Although Signor Wolf-Ferrari's pleasing music to *Le Donne curiose,* or the occasional performance of a comedy, either in the original by Italian players, or in English by some college club or local dramatic troupe, has made Goldoni's name appear now and then on an English or American program, I venture to say that it is still unknown in the English-speaking world, except to the student or traveller. Goldoni's

fellow-countrymen, however, have written of him even more generally than the French have of their genius of comedy, while the second centenary of his birth, celebrated in 1907, was made the occasion of a demonstration more truly national than any ever accorded to the memory of either Shakespeare or Molière.

In writing this biography, my intention has been to tell the story of Goldoni's life for English readers, and, at the same time, to trace the main currents of his prolific work for the stage of his day. He wrote nearly three hundred plays and libretti, and his efforts covered practically the entire realm of the drama; yet he is eminent only as a writer of comedy. I have laid particular stress, therefore, upon his comedic work, my aim having been to present Goldoni not only as a fruitful dramatist, but also as a naturalistic painter of life, whose comedies present a vivid picture of an epoch. His memoirs, begun in his seventy-seventh year and finished when he had reached the ripe age of eighty, are so delightfully ingenuous and frank that I have quoted freely from their pages, it being my conviction that no biographer can portray this merry Venetian more charmingly or more faithfully than he has portrayed himself.

In the chapters devoted to the comedies, I have translated all the quoted passages, whether in prose or verse, using English heroic measure for the excerpts from the versified plays. The Italian verse form most commonly employed by Goldoni is the

Martellian rhymed couplet, a form suggestive of the French Alexandrine, and like it opposed to the spirit of our language. It has seemed wise, therefore, to use, as I did for my translations of Molière's Alexandrines, the blank verse measure of our own dramatic poetry, rather than attempt to render in English Goldoni's rhymed heptameters.

In order that the reader, unacquainted with Italian, may understand their significance, the titles of Goldoni's plays, as well as those by other writers of the period, have been translated. The first time a play is mentioned, or when it becomes the subject of special comment, I have, as in *Molière: A Biography,* given the foreign titles in parentheses. For the Italian titles of plays and books, the prevailing continental method of capitalization has been used. In order not to mar the appearance of the pages by a too frequent use of italics, Italian words such as *scenario* or *cicisbeo,* of which repeated use is made, have, after their first appearance, been printed in Roman type; while, for a like reason, French words in familiar use have not been italicized.

In the footnotes, intended for the student rather than the general reader, only the Italian titles of plays appear, the index being so arranged that the references to any particular play may be found by consulting the title in either English or Italian. The footnotes also give the authorities for important statements, as well as the titles of books or articles from which quotations have been made. The reader

seeking original sources, or wishing to pursue further the study of the dramatist, may find in the bibliography a comprehensive list of the titles, authors, and dates of publication of the books and articles which deal with Goldoni's life and works, or are valuable as biographical and critical sources.

It may be said in this connection that Goldoni has been singularly neglected by Anglo-Saxon writers. Though a few of his comedies have been translated, none of his masterpieces in the Venetian dialect have been brought within the reach of English readers. An incomplete and inadequate translation of his delightful memoirs was made by John Black in 1814, an abridged edition of which was published in Boston in 1877, with a biographical introduction by Mr. Howells, in which Goldoni's character is drawn with both benignity and charm. In her *Studies of the Eighteenth Century in Italy,* Vernon Lee devotes an excellent, though cursory, chapter to his life and dramatic work; in the introduction to his translation of Carlo Gozzi's memoirs John Addington Symonds presents, albeit grudgingly, Goldoni's merits; while in an introduction to an inferior translation of four of his comedies, published in 1892, Miss Helen Zimmern narrates with considerable inaccuracy the principal events of his life. To this list of English writings may be added Edward Copping's *Alfieri and Goldoni: Their Lives and Adventures,* published in 1857, and Mr. Lacy Collison-Morley's recently published *Modern Italian Literature,* which contains

a review of the dramatist's work; yet there is no book in English devoted entirely to this master spirit of Italian comedy.

With less excuse, it would seem, in view of the fact that he wrote for their own stage, French men of letters have been quite as remiss in regard to Goldoni as our own have been. In his delightful *Venise au XVIII^e siècle* Philippe Monnier devotes a pleasing but brief chapter to the dramatist's life and work. Charles Rabany's *Carlo Goldoni: Le théâtre et la vie en Italie au XVIII^e siècle* is comprehensive but not always accurate; while M. Maurice Mignon's chapter on Goldoni in his recently published *Etudes de littérature italienne* is but a superficial review of the dramatist's career.

Probably because of Goethe's praise of him, the Germans have been more assiduous than other foreigners in studying Goldoni, a goodly number of books and doctors' theses devoted to him having appeared in Germany. Among them should be noted J. H. Saal's translation of forty-four of Goldoni's plays, the late Hermann Von Löhner's critical edition of the first volume of Goldoni's *Mémoires* and his studies on Goldoni's life in the *Ateneo Vencto,* H. A. Lüder's *Carlo Goldoni in seinem Verhältnis zu Molière,* J. Merz's *Carlo Goldoni in seiner Stellung zum französischen Lustspiel,* Marcus Landau's *Carlo Goldoni,* J. L. Klein's *Geschichte des italienischen Dramas,* L. Mathar's *Carlo Goldoni auf dem Deutschen Theater des XVIII Jahrhunderts,*

and B. Schmidbauer's *Das Komische bei Goldoni.*

To the Italians we must turn, however, when seeking accurate information about "Papa Goldoni," as they affectionately style him. While it is impossible to detail here the vast mass of admirable literature concerning him that has been published in Italy, notably in 1907, when the second centenary of his birth was celebrated throughout the Peninsula, attention should be called to the definitive edition of his works now being issued by the Municipality of Venice under the editorship of MM. Edgardo Maddalena, Cesare Musatti, Giuseppe Occioni-Bonaffons, Federico Pellegrini, Angelo Scrinzi, and Giuseppe Ortolani, most of whom in previous books and articles have written both ably and copiously upon the dramatist and his works. To the names of these writers and editors should be added those of MM. Guido Mazzoni, Dino Mantovani, Vittorio Malamani, Ferdinando Galanti, Luigi Rasi, Alessandro D'Ancona, Ernesto Masi, Carlo Borghi, and Angelo De Gubernatis, some dead, others still living, yet all ardent Goldonists, whose work, invaluable to students, has enriched the literature of Italy.

A feature which should prove of value to the student is the catalogue of Goldoni's plays, libretti, and miscellaneous writings, to be found in Appendix A, (page 601). Arranged chronologically, this catalogue gives the present, as well as the original, titles of the plays, their sources and salient aspects, and is, I believe, the most comprehensive outline of Gol-

doni's works yet published. While preparing the material for this book, I compiled for my own use a card index containing a summary of each of the comedies, together with its dramatis personæ, its distinctive characteristics, and the approximate date of its first production. When engaged in this work, I was much hampered by the lack of any trustworthy list of Goldoni's plays. I saw, however, that the frequent inaccuracies of his memoirs, as well as the conflicting evidence of contemporary documents, would make its preparation an onerous undertaking, requiring for its accomplishment months or even years of careful research. Not wishing to retard unduly my biographical work, I asked Dr. F. C. L. van Steenderen, Professor of the Romance languages in Lake Forest College, to prepare such a chronological catalogue of the plays as my experience had shown me to be sorely needed. The patience, zeal, and scholarship displayed by him soon convinced me that he possessed every quality necessary for the fulfilment of this arduous task; therefore I felt warranted in entrusting it plenarily to him. The scholarly catalogue he has devised is so entirely his own work, that I take sincere pleasure in giving him the fully merited credit for its preparation, as well as for that of the accompanying biographical chronology and bibliography, which have also been prepared by him. I should, in further justice, add that I have profited by Professor van Steenderen's chronological researches, and that I have sought his philological ad-

vice regarding the translation of obscure Italian or dialectic passages I have wished to quote.

A word regarding the illustrations. The frontispiece is the portrait of Goldoni by Alessandro Longhi; the others are reproductions of paintings by this artist's father, Pietro Longhi, whose pictures, like Goldoni's plays, present faithfully and genially the life of Venice during the years of her decadence. Pietro Longhi has been called the Venetian Hogarth; yet his work is less pessimistic than the Englishman's, his aim having been to arouse a smile rather than to point a cynical moral. In the words of Signor Aldo Ravà, his biographer: "His genius is daintily exquisite, and indulgent of the human foibles which present it with so many acceptable subjects; though he never lays bare, as does Hogarth both often and harshly, either the sores or the wickedness of contemporary life." It has seemed peculiarly appropriate to illustrate this biography with the brushwork of a contemporary who portrayed upon canvas the life of eighteenth-century Venice as minutely and indulgently as Goldoni pictured it upon the stage.

For providing me with proof-sheets of the valuable *note storiche* of the edition of Goldoni's plays being published by the Municipality of Venice, as well as for the continued and kindly interest he has taken in my work, I am greatly beholden to Professor Edgardo Maddalena of Vienna. While gathering my material I was graciously aided by the late Dr. Carlo Malagola, State Archivist of Venice, Signor Luigi

Ferro, his assistant, and Dr. Angelo Scrinzi, Director of the Museo Civico; during a sojourn in Venice, or since my return to my own country, I have received helpful civilities from His Excellency, Baron Mayor des Planches, formerly Ambassador of Italy to the United States, Count Bolognesi, Italian Consul in Chicago, Professor Giuseppe Ortolani, Dr. Cesare Musatti, Dr. Tomaso Sandonnini, Professor Gilberto Secrétant, Professor Italico Brass, Commendatore Ferdinand Ongania, and Mr. George Peabody Eustis. To my colleagues, Mr. Henry B. Fuller and Mr. Wallace Rice, I am indebted for fraternal assistance in reading the proofs; and to Mr. Rice for technical suggestions regarding the metrical translations, the versification in one instance (page 463) being his.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank these Italian and American gentlemen for their courtesy, and at the same time to express to them my appreciation of the encouragement and help they have extended to me during the writing of this book.

H. C. C-T.

Lake Forest, Illinois,
September first, 1913.

GOLDONI

I

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH

IN one of the sunlit squares of Venice stands the pleasing statue of a man, dressed in the fashion of the eighteenth century. His right hand grasps the round head of a cane; his left is carelessly folded behind his back; a few sheets of paper, possibly an act of a comedy, protrude from his pocket, and his foot is advanced as if he were taking a leisurely step toward the Rialto hard by. The smile on the round face beaming beneath the periwig and the three-cornered hat of this man of long ago, is so genial that the most casual tourist will tarry to admire, even though the name "Goldoni," on the base of the statue, be meaningless to him. Obscured though his reputation may be abroad, in Venice this genius of Italian comedy is "Gran Goldoni," most beloved of her children; and it is meet that his statue should adorn one of those little Venetian squares whose life he translated so inimitably to the stage.

The smile the sculptor has portrayed is typical of this gentle lover of mankind. Born in Venice at the beginning of the eighteenth century, he died in Paris while the drums of the Revolution were beat-

ing the reveille of freedom; yet, though the pikes of a new order gleamed beneath his humble window and the air of his adopted land was rent by curses on the régime he had served, he died as he had lived —a kindly man of "the merry century."

It was the century of reason as well as of merriment: though when her satiated neighbours forswore enjoyment to prate of human rights, Italy sighed and sang, and when conquerors bled her, to deaden the pain she jingled her merry carnival bells. In that listless land there was, however, one proud city that had never bowed to Guelph or Ghibelline, nor been ravaged by the armies of France and Austria; for in Venice a doge of native blood still ruled. There the three Inquisitors and the Council of Ten still sat in their imposing robes of state; there impeachments were still dropped stealthily into the Lion's Mouth, while cloaked spies lurked in the shadow of the walls; the manners, laws, and customs of Venice, matured during thirteen centuries of self-government, being still uncontaminated by modern influences. Yet Venice was no longer the lusty city she had been in her prime, the League of Cambrai and Turkish valour having shorn her of her strength, the rust of luxury having stolen in to corrupt. Though the oarsmen of her gilded ship of state, *Bucentaur,* were still clad in red velvet and gold lace, she was feeble with old age. Yet, because of her independence and her freedom from papal influence, she was unique among Italian states. No-

where else in the Peninsula was life so animated, nowhere else were there so many bright intellects, such refinement and good-fellowship; no other city was so pleasure-loving, not even Paris. Fear, however, as well as revelry, had sapped her strength. Her territories on the mainland had dwindled to a few contiguous towns, and the Turk had finally wrested from her all but the illusion of her colonial greatness, tinging with irony these haughty words pronounced by her Doge when, on Ascension Day, amid the flashing of gilded oars and the fluttering of handkerchiefs and fans, he cast her golden wedding-ring into the fickle sea:

"Desponsamus te, mare, in signum veri perpetuique dominii."

Her corrupt society squandered the nights in dancing and gambling at the Ridotto,[1] and frittered the days away in ladies' boudoirs; her joyous people were ever in the streets, laughing at dull care, for Venice, ruled by Folly in bright ribbons and bells, was perpetually reeling with joy and mad caprice. Indeed, there was scarcely a day when a saint was not honoured or a hero glorified; scarcely a day when the balconies along the Grand Canal were not hung with cloth of gold and rich tapestries. But the most joyous holiday was the Carnival, when every one, from doge to soubrette, went masked,

[1] The Ridotto (assembly room), a public casino and gaming-house, opened in 1638, was run as a government concession in an effort to overcome the abuses of private gambling. Its rooms were closed permanently Nov. 27, 1774, and turned into government offices.

humoured and protected by the State in saying and doing anything that might give pleasure—the Carnival, alive during the autumn in spirit, when masking was permitted, and actually lasting from Christmas until Lent. Enervated by wealth and a luxury too long enjoyed, Venice in the eighteenth century was indeed a conscienceless city, the casuistry of her Jesuits having shorn vice of compunction; yet she was not a Sodom in a worthy land, since throughout the Peninsula, and the rest of Europe as well, moral delinquencies obtained, sometimes in an even greater degree.

Only in the haunts of trade, where the merchants of Venice counted their ducats behind iron-barred windows, was there seemliness and worth. These thrifty men lamented the departed glory of their city, and shook their grey heads ominously, when the carnival noises echoed from a neighbouring piazzetta. But they were fewer in number and poorer than their ancestors had been in the days when the argosies of Venice brought to her roadstead the wealth of the Orient, when the lioned banner of St. Mark floated over Cyprus and the Morea, Candia and the Cyclades—ay, even above the walls of Athens and Byzantium.

An age is reflected by its art, and the art of Italy during "this century of incapacity and indolence" was as feeble and flippant as its enervated society; for whenever an effeminate coterie styling itself L'Arcadia lolled in the shade of the Bosco Parrasio

CARNIVAL MASKERS

Museo Correr

near Rome or foregathered in some stuffy drawing-room, it made a languorous mockery of literature, almost as flaccid as the emasculation that permitted its men to philander and frame affected verses, while foreign armies tyrannized over their land. Only in free Venice was the art not contemptible, for here a spirit akin to nationality inspired the pens of stern Apostolo Zeno and testy Carlo Gozzi, as well as the brushes of Tiepolo, the dazzling idealist of that age, of La Rosalba, its amorous portraitist, and of Longhi, its minute interpreter. Tiepolo adorned the domes and ceilings of Venice with religious and profane myths, limpid in atmosphere and radiant with light; La Rosalba and Longhi hung on its walls pictures of itself, the brush of the one disclosing the languor of its boudoirs, that of the other, the vivacity of its streets.

In the canvases of Pietro Longhi, the care-free life of Venice in the merry eighteenth century is portrayed minutely, scarcely a phase of it, from the Ridotto with its brazen crowd to the humblest tavern, being slighted by his dextrous hand; but while this little Venetian Hogarth delved into every corner of "the city of whims," another and a greater artist strolled through its streets, studying its people and their customs in order that he, too, might portray its life. This artist was Carlo Goldoni, the dramatist whose genial statue [2] now adorns the little Venetian square of San Bartolomeo, scarcely a

[2] Modelled by Antonio Dal Zatto and unveiled in 1883.

stone's throw from the Rialto—busy centre of the joyous life he pictured in words.

On February 25th, 1707, while the merry din of a waning carnival was echoing through the streets, Goldoni came into the care-free world of Venice, in a "palazzo" of the narrow Calle di Cà Cent' anni, "a large and beautiful house," as he calls it in his guileless memoirs,[3] situated in the Parish of S. Tomà, between the bridge of Nomboli that formerly spanned the quiet *canaletto* before its door and that of Donna Onesta. The graceful façade of this four-storied palazzo presents to the passer-by of to-day an air of former respectability and comfort that does not belie the state of Goldoni's parents at the time when he was born.

About the middle of the seventeenth century a family flourished at Modena whose surname, Guldoni, as it was formerly spelled, is found in Modenese records as far back as 1401.[4] Its head was Francesco Maria Guldoni, a violinist in the orchestra of the Duke of Parma. He married a girl named Virginia Barilli, three sons and a daughter being born to them, called respectively Carlo Alessandro, Alberto, Luigi, and Antonia, the first of whom was our dramatist's paternal grandfather.

[3] *Mémoires de M. Goldoni pour servir à l'histoire de sa vie, et à celle de son théâtre,* from which the quotations in these pages, not otherwise indicated, are made.

[4] A. G. Spinelli and E. P. Vicini, in *Modena a Carlo Goldoni*, trace the dramatist's descent from a certain Francesco Guldoni, who died in 1584, the name Guldoni occurring in records, however, as far back as 1401.

The family of which Carlo Alessandro was a member, had been since the sixteenth century in easy circumstances. His maternal uncle was councillor of state to the Duke of Modena, and Carlo Alessandro himself was educated at Parma, in a college which numbered among its pupils many sons of the nobility. His own parents must, therefore, have been well-to-do and respected. Furthermore, when he left Modena to become a resident of Venice, he is said to have been "loved and esteemed not only by everybody, but by the Court as well." His brother, it may be added, became a colonel in the army of the Duke of Modena, and later commandant at Finale.

"Two noble Venetians with whom he had been at school in Parma" had urged Carlo Alessandro Goldoni, so his grandson tells us, to remove to Venice,[5] and there he obtained through their influence "a very honourable and lucrative appointment" in the office of the *Five Commercial Sages,* a body originally instituted to assist and supervise commerce, but which, in the seventeenth century, had become a tribunal for the adjudication of disputes between oriental residents in Venice.

Before he reached Venice, Carlo Alessandro had

[5] The year of Carlo Alessandro's removal to Venice is unknown. His son, Giulio, Goldoni's father, who, the dramatist says, was born in Venice, was twenty years old in 1703, which would indicate that Carlo Alessandro had moved to Venice prior to the year 1683, a theory authenticated by the fact that he assisted in receiving the Duke of Modena, Francesco II, when the latter visited Venice during that year. *Modena a Carlo Goldoni,* and *Il Padre di Goldoni,* by A. Lazzari.

already married (1670) a Paduan lady named Catterina Pasini, and their son, Giulio Goldoni, born in Venice about the year 1683, was the dramatist's father.[6]

In his memoirs, Goldoni states that "his grandfather married *'en premières noces'* Mademoiselle Barilli, and that his second wife was a respectable widow with two daughters, belonging to the Salvioni family"; the dramatist's father, Giulio Goldoni, having married the elder of his step-sisters, "a pretty brunette, who limped a little and who was very piquante." Yet Hermann von Löhner[7] points out that there are documents in the archives of the *Curia patriarcale* to show that Carlo Alessandro married neither a Barilli nor a Salvioni, his first wife being Catterina Pasini, and his second, whom he married in 1699, Marta Cappini of Peschiera, who lived in Venice. Barilli, however, was the maiden name of the dramatist's great-grandmother, and Salvioni that of his mother.

It is easier to believe that Goldoni, writing his memoirs at the age of eighty, should have mistaken the maiden name of his great-grandmother for that of his grandmother, than that he should have been guilty of misstating that his father married his step-

[6] This is Von Löhner's statement. A. G. Spinelli, however, says that in 1670 he had already lost his second wife. (*Modena a Carlo Goldoni.*) Since Carlo Alessandro was born in 1645, and was therefore twenty-five years of age in 1670, Von Löhner's statement is probably correct.

[7] *Mémoires de M. Goldoni,* corrected and annotated by Hermann von Löhner.

sister. Possibly Salvioni was the name of the first husband of the Marta who was Carlo Alessandro's second wife, and Cappini that of her own family.[8] Yet of far more interest than the correct maiden name of Carlo Alessandro's second wife, is the prodigal and pleasure-loving nature of that good man, the dramatist having inherited many of the traits he thus ascribes to his grandfather:

> He was a worthy man, but in no wise economical, and being fond of pleasure he readily adapted himself to Venetian gaiety. He had rented a fine country house belonging to the Duke of Massa-Carrara, on the Sile, in the Marca Trevigiana, about six leagues from Venice; and there he led a merry life. The neighbouring landowners could not endure having Goldoni invite villagers and strangers to his home, and one of his neighbours took steps to oust him from his house, but my grandfather went to Carrara and leased all the properties the Duke possessed in the State of Venice. Returning home proud of his victory, he increased his expenditures. He gave comedy and opera at his house, all the best actors and celebrated musicians being at his command, and his guests coming from all quarters. I was born in the midst of this riot and luxury. Was it possible for me to scorn theatrical entertainments? Was it possible for me not to love gaiety?

According to Goldoni, this merry and typical Venetian spendthrift died in 1712, his second wife soon following him to the grave. Yet Hermann von Löhner and Carlo Borghi,[9] the most assiduous students who have investigated Goldoni's early life, agree in their belief that Carlo Alessandro died about

[8] A surmise concurring with that of A. G. Spinelli and E. P. Vicini. (*Modena a Carlo Goldoni.*)

[9] Hermann von Löhner, op. cit., and Carlo Borghi, *Memorie sulla vita di Carlo Goldoni.*

1703, and that his wife had died previous to that year; therefore the riot and luxury into which the dramatist was born were probably instigated by his father, a surmise according with Goldoni's own statement that "his father's education was not what it ought to have been." "He did not lack intelligence," he adds; "but he had not been properly cared for. He could not retain his father's post, which a clever Greek was able to wrest from him." Moreover, he apparently did his best to spoil his son, since he ordered a puppet-show to be built for him when he was but four years old, which he manipulated himself with the assistance of three or four friends. Indeed, both the dramatist's parents were fondly indulgent, as Goldoni thus indicates:

> My mother brought me into the world with little pain, and this increased her love for me; my first appearance was not, as is usual, announced by cries, and this gentleness seemed an indication of the pacific character which from that day on I have ever preserved. I was the idol of the house; my mother taking charge of my education, and my father of my amusements.

Whether Goldoni's grandfather was alone responsible for the dissipation of the family fortune, or whether Giulio Goldoni continued the prodigal life his father, Carlo Alessandro, had inaugurated, until "the freehold property of the family in Modena was sold, and the entailed property mortgaged," is a matter of slight importance in comparison with the cruel fact that, through extravagance and riotous living, the fortune became so reduced during the dram-

atist's childhood, that "its sole possession was the Venetian property of his mother and aunt." Signor Lazzari [10] insists, in fact, that Goldoni was not born "in the midst of the riot and luxury" of his grandparents' house, but "in very modest surroundings." In any event, the family became impoverished, and its burdens were heightened by the birth of another son named Gian Paolo,[11] destined to become a thorn in its side. "Embarrassed by financial losses" and "oppressed by melancholy," Giulio Goldoni, the dramatist's father, left his hearth-side and went to Rome where, on the advice of a Venetian friend named Alessandro Bonicelli, he studied medicine under Giovanni Lancisi, the physician of Pope Clement XI.[12] When he had obtained his doctor's degree,[13] he settled in Perugia, where he practised medicine.

Though he pursued his studies to the worthy end of earning a livelihood, Giulio Goldoni deserted an estimable wife, whom he left in Venice with her two children and her sister, to brave the reverses in the

[10] Op. cit.

[11] Hermann von Löhner, op. cit., and *Carlo Goldoni e le sue memoire,* notes that a Gian Paolo Goldoni was born Oct. 1, 1709, and baptized in the Parish Church of S. Tomà five days later; another Gian Paolo being born Jan. 10, 1712, and baptized on the 16th of that month, also in the church of S. Tomà; facts which indicate that the former died in infancy, and that the latter, the brother of whom Goldoni makes frequent mention in his memoirs, was given the same name—Gian Paolo—or Giampaolo, as it is frequently written.

[12] According to Carlo Borghi (op. cit.), he first studied medicine in Modena in 1704, under Francesco Tarti.

[13] Arnaldo Della Torre (*Saggio di una bibliografia delle opere intorno a Carlo Goldoni*) places the conferring of this degree in the year 1718.

family fortunes, Margherita Salvioni, the dramatist's mother, being, as he informs us, "pious, but not bigoted," while on another occasion he speaks of her as "that tender mother who always caressed me, but never complained of me." When her husband went to Rome, she farmed out Gian Paolo, her youngest son, and busied herself solely with the future genius of Italian comedy, who was "gentle, quiet, and obedient," he assures us, and able to read and write at the age of four, when his education was entrusted to a tutor. He was fond of books, and as his mother "gave herself no concern" about his choice of them, he delighted in the comedies he found in his father's library, those of Cicognini being his "preference."

At the age of eleven,[14] he had "the presumption" to write a comedy, the following being his account of this precocious commencement of his life-work:

> My aunt laughed at me, my mother both scolded and caressed me, my tutor affirmed that it contained more wit and common sense than was compatible with my age; but the most singular

[14] In his memoirs and in the preface to Vol. I of the Pasquali edition, Goldoni says he was eight years of age, when he wrote this comedy. In the preface to Vol. II of the Pasquali edition, however, he says that he was nine at the time. In the same preface, as well as in the Memoirs, he says that as soon as his father in Perugia became aware of his eldest son's "happy faculties," he sent for him. In the preface to Vol. III of the same edition, he says that he was twelve when he acted in a play at Perugia, and that this was in the year he had honours in Latin. Since he arrived in Perugia "in the middle of the course of the *stagione*," and gained his Latin honours at the end of it, he must have been twelve years old not more than a year after he arrived in Perugia. This would make the age at which he wrote his first comedy eleven, or a trifle less, but certainly not the age of eight, given in the Memoirs, a view in which A. Della Torre and Guido Mazzoni concur.

thing was that my godfather, a lawyer, richer in money than in knowledge, would not believe that it was my work. He maintained that it had been revised and corrected by my tutor, who considered this opinion shameful; but luckily, when the dispute was waxing warm, . . . a third person made his appearance, who was able to pacify them, . . . a friend of the family, who, having seen me at work on the play, bore witness to my puerilities and flashes of wit.

This "childish folly," as Goldoni calls it, after going the rounds of his mother's friends, was read by his father, who was so pleased by his son's precocity, that he insisted upon his joining him in Umbria, a demand to which his wife reluctantly conceded, when a worthy priest, who was a friend of the family, consented to take young Carlo with him on a journey he contemplated making to Perugia. On the way to that pleasing hill-town, our ambitious young Venetian rode a horse for the first time, an experience he thus describes:

They laid hold of me by the middle, and threw me into the saddle. Bless me! Boots, stirrups, whip and bridle! What was to be done with all these things? I was tossed about like a sack, the reverend father laughed heartily, the servants ridiculed me, and I laughed at myself; but by degrees I got acquainted with my nag, whom I regaled with bread and fruit until he became my friend, and in six days' time we arrived at Perugia.

There, at the age of twelve, he was placed by his father in a Jesuit school where, according to his own story, he passed the first term's examination at the head of the primary class, and was promoted to a higher grade; yet in the records of the institution his

name appears among those who were plucked.[15] More patent than his aptitude for study during this sojourn in Perugia is his love for the stage, a taste his indulgent father apparently shared, since during the school vacation Dr. Goldoni obtained the use of a hall in the Palazzo Antinori, where, under his direction, his son and some schoolmates performed a comedy,[16] young Carlo playing a female part, and speaking the prologue so successfully that he was nearly blinded by a "bushel of sugar-plums" with which he was "overwhelmed," that being "the common form of applause in the Papal States." His father thought that he showed "considerable intelligence," but was convinced that he would "never make a good actor." "And he was not mistaken," Goldoni remarks laconically.

Unable to endure the separation from her eldest son, Margherita Salvioni finally moved to Perugia, but, accustomed as she was to the mild climate of Venice, the bracing air of the Appennines prevented her from enjoying in Umbria "a single day of good health." His Perugian patron having died, and the

[15] A. Valeri, *Una bugia di Carlo Goldoni,* in *La Rassegna internazionale,* vol. VIII, 1902.

[16] *La Sorellina di Don Pilone,* by Girolamo Gigli, whom Giulio Caprin styles "the only Italian writer of comedy before Goldoni who had a correct intuition of dramatic art." In regard to this performance it should be noted that while in his memoirs Goldoni gives to his father the credit of inaugurating it, saying among other things that it was he who had the stage built, in the preface to Vol. III of the Pasquali edition he says: "The work (prologue) was by the master of the house (Antinori) who had the stage built, and who defrayed all the expenses for the sole glory of having the audience enjoy his exquisite style."

local physicians having begun "to eye him jealously," Dr. Goldoni went with his family to Rimini, where he tarried long enough to place his son in a Dominican school; then journeyed to Chioggia, where he left his wife in a salubrious climate, while he went to Modena to salvage something from the wreck of the family fortunes.

His studies of the humanities and rhetoric having been completed in Perugia, young Carlo, destined, as he informs us, for his father's profession, was ostensibly attending at Rimini meanwhile, the philosophical lectures of a Dominican logician named Candini. A mild case of smallpox gave him a legitimate excuse for neglecting his studies, but when he had recovered from that noisome disease, Candini's dull lectures drove him to seek distraction in the performances of a troupe of strolling players.

Perugia being in the Papal States, women were not permitted to act there; so at Rimini he saw actresses for the first time and found that they "adorned the stage in a more stimulating way" than beardless youths. Indeed, so alluring were those of Rimini that he left the pit where he had gone modestly at first, to join the young sparks he saw loitering in the wings. The brazen looks he received in return for his own shy glances so emboldened him that soon he was enjoying caresses as well, for when the actresses learned that he was a Venetian like themselves, they showered him with attentions, Florindo, their manager, even inviting him to dine. Alas for

dry logic! No sooner did the young rascal learn that his merry friends were bound for Chioggia than a "longing to see his mother" overcame him, so intense that in spite of the remonstrances of the Riminian friends of his family, he stuffed two shirts and a night-cap into his pockets, and hid himself in the bows of the Thespian barque; with the connivance, be it added, of its crew, for when the sails were set and he had emerged from his hiding-place, he was welcomed by laughing lips to the joyous life he thus depicts:

My actors were not like those Scarron describes; yet in the aggregate this troupe aboard-ship presented a pleasing sight. A dozen people—as many actors as actresses, a prompter, a stage carpenter, a property man, four maids, two wet nurses, children of all ages, dogs, cats, monkeys, parrots, birds, pigeons, and a lamb—it was Noah's Ark. The boat was very large and divided into a number of compartments, each woman having her nook hidden by curtains; a bed was provided for me beside the manager, and we were all comfortable.

The supercargo, who was cook and steward as well, rang a little bell as the signal for breakfast, whereupon we gathered in a sort of saloon that had been improvised amidships on the top of boxes, trunks, and bales, and there on an oval table were coffee, tea, milk, joints, water, and wine. The leading lady demanded soup. There was none; whereat she flew into a rage and was only pacified with all the difficulty in the world, by a cup of chocolate, she being the ugliest and the most exacting.

After breakfast some one suggested that we gamble till dinner time. I played *tresset* tolerably well, it being my mother's favourite game, which she had taught me. We were on the point of starting *tresset* and piquet, but a faro bank that had been opened on the main-deck attracted all hands—more a source of amusement than profit, however, as the manager would not have permitted it to be otherwise.

We gambled, laughed, frolicked, and played jokes till the dinner bell rang; then rushed to the table. Macaroni! We fell upon it and devoured three soup-tureens-full. Beef à la mode, cold mutton, a loin of veal, a dessert, and a first-rate wine, ah, what a good dinner! There is no cheer like an appetite.

We remained four hours at table, playing various instruments and singing a great deal. The soubrette sang divinely; I eyed her attentively and she aroused in me a strange sensation. A mishap, alas, interrupted the pleasure of the company. A cat escaped from its cage. It was the leading lady's pussy, and she called on all hands for help. We chased it, but the cat, being as savage as its mistress, skipped and leapt about and hid itself everywhere; finding itself pursued, it clawed up the mast. Madame Clarice fainted, whereupon a sailor went up the rigging to catch the cat; but it jumped into the sea and remained there. In her despair, its mistress wished to kill every animal in sight and even to throw her maid into her pussy's watery grave. We all took the maid's part and when the quarrel became general, the manager appeared, to laugh and joke and pet the offended woman, until at last she began to laugh herself. Thus the cat was forgotten.

Enough, I am convinced. To chat longer about these insignificant events would be taking an unfair advantage of the reader. The wind was fair; we were at sea three days, enjoying the same amusements, the same pleasures, and the same appetite. On the fourth day we reached Chioggia.

Thus at the age of fourteen, Goldoni was initiated into Bohemianism, and thus a lifelong fondness was engendered in his heart, for he confesses that ever afterwards he entertained "a preferential taste for soubrettes." Yet this stage-struck lad was not wholly compunctionless. With Florindo, the manager, as his emissary, he obtained his mother's forgiving embrace, and when a letter from his father at Modena announced that through the kind offices of a name-

sake, the Marquis Goldoni-Vidoni,[17] a scholarship had been obtained for him in the Papal College at Pavia, the young scapegrace was constrained to realize "the imprudence of his escapade"; his conscience, however, was so slightly smitten that, when his mother forbade him the theatre, he visited the soubrette instead.

His father soon returned to Chioggia, fondly expectant that certain properties in Modena might yield enough to permit the family to live comfortably; a hope that made him forgive more readily his rascally first-born for decamping from school with a band of strolling players. Dr. Goldoni, moreover, shared Carlo's liking for actresses, and as he had once admired the leading lady of Florindo's troupe, he felt it necessary, when pardoning his recalcitrant son, to thank these Thespians for their hospitable care of him.

Dr. Goldoni settled in Chioggia, and soon had a considerable practice among both rich and poor. His incorrigible first-born, meanwhile, was roaming the streets while awaiting the confirmation of his scholarship at Pavia. To keep him out of mischief, and at the same time give him an insight into the ways of his future calling, his father decided to take him with him on his professional visits. Being called to attend a young woman of questionable character,

[17] Pietro Goldoni Vidoni Ajmi, Marquese di San Raffaele e Signore di Viliceto, a Milanese Senator and Governor of Pavia, whom Dr. Goldoni met accidentally in the latter city in 1721, and who befriended him because he was a namesake.

whose mother was her go-between, he left young Carlo in an outer room while he treated his patient,—the mother making hay, meanwhile, by arranging a rendezvous between the lad and her daughter. By tracking him to their nest before they had had time to pluck him, a family servant saved this conscienceless fledgling from the claws of these vampires, but it was high time that some employment be found for his idle hands.

"I was naturally joyous," Goldoni tells us, "yet subject from childhood to hypochondriacal or melancholic vapours." Attacked by "this lethargic illness" after the departure of his Thespian friends, he vainly sought amusement in Chioggia, until he became "gloomy and thoughtful" and "lost weight perceptibly."

As he had evinced an aversion for medicine, it was decided at a family council that he should study law while awaiting the time of his matriculation at Pavia; whereupon he was taken to Venice by his mother, and installed in the law office of Gian Paolo Indric, a prominent barrister and his uncle by marriage.

There he "discharged his duties with accuracy," and "merited his uncle's praise," but found time, nevertheless, to "avail himself of the pleasures of a residence in Venice," its seven theatres being his especial delight. Throughout the summer of 1722, he remained in the city of the lagoons, and in the autumn, accompanied by his father, he set out for Pavia,

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word having been received that the promised scholarship had been awarded him.

In Modena the journey was arrested for three days to enable Dr. Goldoni to collect "certain governmental annuities and house rents" that were due him, a lucky provision, since on reaching Milan he was informed by his noble benefactor that before his son could enter the Ghislieri College at Pavia, a papal institution, he must be tonsured, as well as provided with certificates of baptism, celibacy, and good moral character. Having had no premonition of these requirements, father and son were forced to tarry at Milan, while Madame Goldoni obtained the necessary documents in Venice. The three certificates were soon forthcoming, but the patriarch of Venice would not grant permission for Carlo to be tonsured, "without the settlement of the patrimony ordained by the canons of the Church." As Dr. Goldoni's property was not situated in the Venetian dominions, and his wife's was entailed, it became necessary to apply to the senate for a dispensation, a bit of ecclesiastical red tape that postponed the matriculation for several months. As the guests of the Marquis Goldoni, Carlo and his father tarried in Milan for a fortnight, then set out for Pavia, "well provided with letters of recommendation." There they lodged in "a good bourgeois house" while awaiting the official documents. An introduction from the Marquis Goldoni to Professor Lauzio enabled Carlo to attend the lectures of that jurisconsult in the meantime, and also to

browse in his library, where he devoured a collection of ancient and modern comedies, whenever he became weary of thumbing musty treatises on Roman law.

While ransacking Professor Lauzio's book shelves for plays to read, he made the mortifying discovery that there was an English, a Spanish, and a French drama, but no Italian drama. "Wishing passionately to see his country rise to the level of others," he vowed he would contribute his share to that end. Though he kept this youthful resolution worthily, this lad in his teens could scarcely have foreseen that he was destined to rescue Italian comedy from the obscene mire in which it wallowed, and by cleansing it and imbuing it with nationalism, raise it almost to the superlative level French comedy had attained in the hands of Molière.

While thus conceiving his life-work, he awaited impatiently the documents that would permit him to become a full-fledged collegian. When they finally arrived, he received the tonsure at the hands of the cardinal-archbishop of Pavia (Dec. 25, 1722), and entered the Ghislieri College. He was not quite sixteen when he donned the *sovrana* or college gown, bearing on a velvet stole attached to the left shoulder the Ghislieri arms embroidered in gold and silver, the pontifical tiara and the keys of St. Peter,—a costume, as he confesses, "calculated to give a young man an air of importance and arouse his vanity."

At the Ghislieri College, the students "acted pre-

cisely as they pleased," he informs us, "there being a great deal of dissipation within, and a great deal of freedom without." He learned fencing, dancing, music, and drawing, as well as "all possible games of commerce and chance," and contrived meanwhile to find his way "into the most charming houses of the town." His Venetian jargon "was agreeable to the ladies," his age and figure "were not displeasing," and his couplets and songs "were by no means ill-relished." "Was it my fault," he laments, "if I employed my time badly? Yes; for there were a few wise and correct fellows among the forty composing our number, whom I should have imitated." Indeed, many escapades mar young Goldoni's course at the Ghislieri College, he being by his own confession "joyous, weak, and fond of pleasure."

His long summer vacations were passed in the bosom of his fond family at Chioggia, that quaint fishing town appearing to him "more dirty than ever" after a sojourn at Pavia. During his first holiday a worthy canon, to whom he appealed for plays to read, inadvertently gave him Machiavelli's obscene masterpiece, *The Mandrake* (*La Mandragola*). His father, who knew its character, lectured him severely for reading it; yet the lad saw that it was the "first comedy of character that had ever fallen into his hands," and he was "charmed by it." Still ignorant of French, he resolved to learn that language in order that he might study the comedies of Molière. Meanwhile, he accustomed himself "to consider men

closely, and never to let an original character elude him."

On the way home from one of his vacations, as the guest of a Venetian diplomat's staff, he travelled luxuriously on the river Po in a private *burchiello*. There were ten in the party, all players of some instrument except himself, a lack of musical talent he endeavoured to make up for by writing in verse a daily chronicle of the journey. But this was not his only undergraduate manifestation of literary talent, for when he returned to Chioggia for his second summer holiday, he wrote a sermon at the request of a nun who was his mother's friend. The sermon was about a relic that had just been presented to the nun's convent of St. Francis, and a young priest delivered it so effectively that the audience was moved to tears, Goldoni being showered with compliments when it became known that he was its author.

Our young student was "plenteously endowed with reason for his age," he says, but he "was at the mercy of rash escapades." And he adds, "they did me great harm, as you will perceive, and you will pity me perhaps." Thus, on his first journey back from Chioggia to Pavia, he stopped at Modena, where the maid-servant of his lodging-house wished to elope with him, but he assures us that he was not "enough of a libertine to take advantage of her." Reaching Piacenza, he found himself, like many another student, stoney-broke, and as fate would have it, he discovered a conscience-stricken relative who con-

fessed to owing his father six hundred livres *tournois,* a goodly sum which the young rogue succeeded in collecting as his father's representative, and thus imbursed, he reached Pavia, where he aroused the envy of his fellow-students by making a six days' journey during the Christmas holidays with his patron, the Marquis Goldoni, a "piece of ostentation" that caused two jealous classmates to lock him in a brothel they had enticed him to enter, without his being aware of its character. He escaped by jumping from a window, but the affair reached the ears of the college authorities. To exonerate himself, he denounced the guilty, but soon reaped the tattler's reward.

There was, it appears, so great an animosity in Pavia between town and gown that forty townsmen resolved never to marry any girl who received the visits of students, with the result that mothers of marriageable daughters proscribed all wearers of the *sovrana.* Finding the doors of "the charming houses" he had been in the habit of frequenting, closed to him, Goldoni considered his honour at stake, and on the advice of classmates who sought his undoing for the affair of the brothel, he armed himself with a brace of pistols; whereupon his traitorous comrades secretly denounced him to the college authorities for carrying concealed weapons. Though arrested and confined to his room, he welcomed his punishment, since it gave him sorely needed time to prepare his thesis; but his enemies,

alas, invaded his privacy and "tickled his self-love" in this wise:

"You are a poet," said they, "and consequently you have surer and better arms for your revenge than pistols and guns. A stroke of the pen opportunely discharged is a bomb that crushes the chief offender, its fragments wounding his adherents right and left." "Courage, courage," they cried in chorus; "we shall supply you with curious anecdotes, and you, as well as ourselves, will be revenged."

Thus tempted, he composed, in the form of a Roman *Atellana,* a satire entitled *The Colossus,* which, when circulated throughout the town by Goldoni's false friends, so wounded the sensibilities of twelve worthy and respectable families that they cried for vengeance, and sought the author's life. Luckily, he was still under arrest, but fellow-students were insulted, the Papal College was besieged, and so great was the animosity created by "the piquant sallies and shafts of this *vis comica,*" that the budding dramatist was expelled from his Alma Mater despite the appeals made by his patron, the Marquis Goldoni, to the archbishop, the governor, and the patron of the college.

Ashamed to face the scorn of his parents, protectors, and friends, Goldoni resolved to go to Rome, he says, in the hope that Gravina, the poet and critic, would befriend him as he had befriended Metastasio. But Gravina had been dead seven years, so that was a purpose he could scarcely have hoped to fulfil. His state of mind must have been desperate, however, and furthermore, he was penniless. The college au-

thorities put him aboard a river packet, paid his fare to Chioggia, and advanced him thirty *paoli* for contingencies. At Piacenza he attempted to go ashore, with the intention of footing it to Rome, but found that orders to detain him had been given; therefore, as he expresses it, he had "no alternative but to go to Chioggia or throw himself into the Po."

On the voyage thither, a Dominican fellow-traveller possessed himself of the remorseful lad's thirty *paoli,* as "an alms to propitiate the wrath of God"; yet, when Chioggia was reached, this hypocrite "touched the heart of a tender mother" and admonished a good-natured father "not to forget the parable of the prodigal son," so successfully that he fairly earned the lad's *paoli,* as well as the good meals he ate at the Goldoni board. This monk was an arrant impostor, however, who, unwittingly aided by Dr. Goldoni, obtained from the latter's patients, the nuns of St. Francis, a goodly stock of oil and money in exchange for a sham miracle he performed, by passing a piece of the Virgin's lace through fire, the lace being "nothing more or less than iron wire arranged in such a manner as to deceive the eye." When the nuns had been reprimanded by their bishop, and the monk had decamped, Dr. Goldoni, accompanied by his son Carlo, departed for Udine, a city in the Venetian Friuli, where he had been summoned professionally.

The future dramatist was now in his eighteenth year. He had run away from one school, and had

been expelled from another, therefore it was time for him to buckle to serious work; yet though he assures us that he profited more during the six months he passed at Udine from the lectures of a jurisconsult named Movelli, than he had during the three years he had passed at Pavia, he confesses that he was still "young, and required agreeable relaxations."

On hearing a quadragesimal sermon delivered by a former Augustinian friar, he wrote a sonnet containing "the three points of its division, word for word," and so greatly was he elated by "the praise of a gentleman of Udine well versed in belles-lettres" that he sonnetized thirty-five more of the same preacher's sermons and published them in pamphlet form, thereby eliciting the preacher's thanks, as well as the praise of the town officials, to whom he had tactfully dedicated these youthful efforts.

Though "the novelty of this work thrilled him, and the rapidity with which he executed it surprised him," the young man found "agreeable relaxations" of a less worthy nature. Four doors from his lodging dwelt a young lady "as affable, beautiful, and courteous as she was modest," whom he eyed ardently when she sat in her window, and followed longingly when she went to mass. Her maid soon discovered his infatuation and played upon his ardour to her own profit. She gave him fond notes, and at night beneath a balcony, permitted him tenderly to address "a head covered with a night-cap." When his most amorous words were received with peals of laughter,

and the window was shut in his face, the wily maid palliated the affront with the promise of a rendezvous with her mistress, but not until Goldoni had bought and given a present consisting of a cross, earrings, necklace, and brooch of coloured Vienna stones. He saw his inamorata at church, "decked out in his trinkets," and he was "as happy as a king," but at the rendezvous, the maid appeared instead of the young lady, with a cock-and-bull story to tell about having long concealed her own ardent passion for him, because a cruel mistress wished to prey upon his infatuation. Though she was prepared to give him "most convincing proofs" of her love, Goldoni's suspicions were aroused, and instead of falling into the amorous trap the minx had set for him, he plotted her undoing. Coached in the wiles of her sex by a little milliner with whom, as he confesses, he had already "taken several pleasure trips," at their next rendezvous he confronted the trickish maid with several witnesses who knew her character, and forced from her brazen lips the confession that her hand had written the fond notes, that her head had been the one in the night-cap, and that his trinkets had been sold, instead of given, to her unsuspecting mistress, still in blissful ignorance of his passion.

"To indemnify himself," as he expresses it, "for the time he had lost," he dallied with the daughter of a lemonade-seller,[18] who abetted her mother in surpris-

[18] In the preface to Vol. IX of the Pasquali edition, Goldoni states that she was the daughter of a *caffettiere;* in his memoirs he describes her as the daughter of a *limonadier.*

ing him during a nocturnal rendezvous and forcing from him a promise of marriage. To escape from the wiles of these women he fled to Görz, where his father had gone to attend professionally the Count of Lantieri, an official in the service of the Austrian Emperor.

Goldoni remained several months in the household of this nobleman, the greater portion of the time being spent in the count's feudal town of Wippach, where the table was "abundantly served," "the wines excellent," and toasts were drunk "every moment." To gratify his young guest's passion for the drama, the Count refurbished a disused puppet-booth, in which, "for the amusement of the company," our future dramatist presented *The Sneezing of Hercules* (*Lo Starnuto di Ercole*), a play for marionettes written by Pier Jacopo Martelli, a poet whose fourteen-syllabled measure, known as Martellian verse, Goldoni was to use frequently in his versified comedies.

While Dr. Goldoni was completing his noble patient's cure, his son visited Laibach, Gratz, Trieste, Aquileia, Gradisca, and Wippach, in the company of the count's secretary. On the completion of this pleasure trip, Carlo returned with his father to Chioggia, where he arrived during the autumn of 1726, Dr. Goldoni having been induced to take a road that did not lead through Udine, his scampish son being in dread of a "disagreeable encounter" with the drabs who had ensnared him. The youthful reprobate thus describes his home-coming:

On our arrival at Chioggia we were received as a mother receives a dear son, as a wife receives her dear husband, after a long absence. I was delighted to see again that virtuous mother who was so tenderly attached to me; after having been seduced and deceived I needed to be loved.

The maternal and filial embraces were of short duration, however, a letter having come from a cousin who lived at Modena, in which young Carlo, being urged to study law at the university there, was offered moral guidance, as well as assistance in finding a suitable lodging-house. This invitation gave rise "to endless reasonings, for and against, between father and mother," but the master of the house carried the day, and soon the wayward lad was journeying to Modena on a river packet, commanded by "an aged and spare" man named Bastia, who was so devout that he exhorted his passengers to say their rosaries and recite the litanies of the Virgin. The laughter of three renegade Jews, who had so far forsworn their own faith as to eat bacon at dinner, rudely interrupted these devotions; but the piety of the packet's commander impressed our contrite young passenger so favourably that, on reaching Modena, he decided to lodge in the river-man's "sanctified house," a decision in which his solicitous relative concurred.

Although he began the study of legal procedure under a famous lawyer and had the good fortune to meet Muratori, the historian, whose nephew was his chum, his scholastic career was again cut short. At Modena, however, he was undone by religious fer-

vour, instead of by student pranks or by the wiles of soubrettes, "a frightful scene" which he witnessed a few days after his arrival having affected his impressionable nature so forcibly that his mind was "troubled" and his "senses were agitated" in this wise:

I saw in the midst of a crowd a scaffold erected to a height of five feet, on which a man appeared with his head bared and his hands bound. He was a priest whom I knew, an enlightened literary man, a celebrated poet, well known and highly esteemed in Italy, he being the Abbé J.-B.-V.[19] One friar held a book, another questioned the culprit, who answered haughtily. The spectators clapped their hands and encouraged him, the upbraiding increased, the disgraced man trembled; I could endure it no longer. Thoughtful, disturbed, and amazed, I departed, my vapours attacking me immediately. I returned home, and shutting myself in my room, plunged into gloomy and humiliating reflections upon humanity.

The priest, it appears, had been denounced by a woman for uttering indecent language while giving her the sacrament, and this fellow-sinner's degradation caused Goldoni to review his own amorous delinquencies so abjectly, that he began to say his rosary devoutly and go to mass daily with Bastia, his pious

[19] Hermann von Löhner tried to discover the identity of this abbé. He found the initials J.-B.-V. corresponded to those of the poet Gio. Battista Vicini. A. G. Spinelli later discovered a sonnet, in which it is stated that Vicini "Del foco punitor del Santo Uffizio." A note adds that he "was condemned by the Inquisition on account of his many foolish errors and his obscene lewdness," Spinelli's comment being that "Von Löhner's supposition that the initials J.-B.-V. may hide the name of our poet Gio. Battista Vicini, perhaps touches the truth." This probability is strengthened by a letter from Goldoni, dated Dec. 9, 1757, written as Ernesto Masi suggests to Vicini, and which contains the following: "Have confidence in a man of honour who esteems you, who has always esteemed you *in spite of certain mortifications for which your enemies are to blame.*"

landlord, a devotee who nourished his young lodger with "so much unction," that he resolved to renounce the world and become a Capuchin monk. But Dr. Goldoni, in the words of his son, "was no fool," for when Carlo announced his intention of "enveloping himself in a cowl," instead of being opposed, he was brought to Venice and taken to the theatres of that joyous city, a cure that in fifteen days drove all thoughts of the cloister from his impressionable mind. When "his vapours were dissipated" and he was "restored to reason," he was taken to Chioggia, where he became, so he says, "dearer and more interesting" to his mother "because of the absence of her younger son."

Being destined for the army, Goldoni's ne'er-do-well brother, Gian Paolo, then a lad of fifteen, had been taken to Zara, the capital of Dalmatia, by a soldier cousin of his mother, who "took charge of his education and afterward placed him in his regiment." Meanwhile the first-born, now in his twenty-first year, despaired of his future. He had "experienced so many reverses," and "so many singular catastrophes" had happened to him, that the dramatic art, of "which he was still fond" and which he would long since have embraced had he "been master of his own will," seemed his only resource. But his father, though "vexed to see him the sport of fortune," did not allow himself to be cast down. Being acquainted both with the Podestà of Chioggia and also with the criminal chancellor and his coadjutor, Dr. Goldoni obtained

for his froward son an appointment as the coadjutor's assistant, a post "without salary," but which enabled the lad to "enjoy the pleasures of society" as well as "a good table, an abundance of plays, concerts, balls, and banquets."

"Aware of the necessity of making a reputation for himself," the young official performed his duties so ably that the criminal chancellor soon entrusted him with "thorny commissions" that did not pass through the lazy hands of his assistant. When transferred to the town of Feltre, the chancellor appointed young Goldoni his coadjutor. Yet, howsoever successfully the future master of Italian comedy may have fulfilled his official duties in Chioggia, the lasting work he performed in that odd town was to learn the droll ways of its inhabitants; since, inspired by his experience as assistant to the coadjutor of Chioggia, he wrote in after years his masterpiece, *The Chioggian Brawls* (*Le Baruffe Chiozzotte*), the first comedy of any land to mirror truly and affectionately the common people, without nobles to scorn them or clowns to belie them.

While awaiting the time when he was to leave for Feltre, and assimilating the quaint life of Chioggia he was to paint so inimitably one day, he learned much about human nature from the criminal proceedings in the court of which he was a minor official. Meanwhile, he praised the podestà in verse and "expatiated at great length on the virtues and personal qualities of his consort," both of whom had been kind to him. He made love, too, on his own account, but in a way

more legitimate than had been his previous wont, for though there was a stain upon the birth of the convent pupil who enlisted his affections, she was so "beautiful, rich, and amiable," that he wished to marry her.

A nun at the convent where his new inamorata was ensconced pretended to abet his suit, but "Mademoiselle N. . . . ," as he styles her in his memoirs, had an old guardian who suborned the nun to further his own suit for his ward's hand. This false confidante sought to propitiate Goldoni with the assurance that as "a young wife must shorten the days of an old husband," he might soon wed "a pretty widow, who had been a wife only in name." Refusing to be thus mollified, he bowed himself out of the convent parlour in silence, "never saw nun or pupil again, and happily soon forgot both of them," a result easy to accomplish, it appears, for no sooner had he been installed in his new office at Feltre than he discovered that there was a troupe of actors in that mountain town, among whom was his Riminian friend, Florindo, now reduced by old age to playing the rôles of kings in tragedy and fathers in comedy. Yet in spite of his proximity to a provincial green-room, Goldoni assures us that for several months he laid aside every idea of pleasure and amusement, in order to apply himself seriously to official work, a chancellorship being his aspiration. But in the fulfilment of his duties as coadjutor, he was again brought within the allurement of bewitching eyes.

THE CONVENT PARLOUR

Palazzo Doria, Rome

Being ordered to conduct an investigation in the country ten leagues from Feltre, he induced several friends of both sexes to accompany him on a "delicious expedition," during which they "never dined or supped in the same place, and for twelve nights never slept in beds." Frequently, they went on foot "along delightful roads bordered with vines and shaded by fig trees." Sometimes they breakfasted on milk, and sometimes they shared the fare of peasants; but wherever they went "they saw nothing but fêtes, rejoicings, and entertainments," and in the evening "there were balls the whole night long in which the ladies, as well as the men, were indefatigable."

In this gay party there were two sisters, and his liking for the unmarried one—a young lady "as prudent and modest as her married sister was headstrong and foolish"—had inspired Goldoni to organize this delectable excursion, which gave him the opportunity to fall in love, and find himself acceptable to the object of his longing. The effects of "these balls the whole night long," however, were so severe that when the party returned to Feltre, Goldoni was indisposed for a month and his "poor Angelica lay ill of a fever for forty days."

There was a theatre in the governor's palace at Feltre, and when the merrymakers had recovered from the fatigues of their journey, Goldoni was asked by his friends to manage some private theatricals. The operas of Metastasio were then the fashion, and as they were "given everywhere even without music,"

the young impresario selected two of them for presentation, and put the arias into recitative. He reserved the worst parts for himself, and "acted wisely," he tells us, he being "completely unsuited to tragedy." "Luckily," he continues, "I had composed two small pieces in which I played two character parts and redeemed my reputation." [20]

He tried to induce his "beautiful Angelica" to accept a rôle in one of these performances, but she was timid, and moreover her parents refused their consent. She was jealous, too, and suffered much from seeing her lover on such a familiar footing with the actresses of his amateur troupe. Though "the poor little girl loved him tenderly and sincerely," and he "loved her also with his whole soul," Goldoni did not marry pretty Angelica, the termination of this love affair being thus naïvely told by him:

> She was the first person, I may say, whom I had ever loved. She aspired to become my wife, and would have been, if certain strange reflections, that were well founded, however, had not deterred me. Her elder sister had been a remarkable beauty, but after the birth of her first child she became ugly. The younger had the same complexion, and the same characteristics. Hers was one of those delicate beauties the air injures, and the slightest weariness or pain impairs. Of this, I had had evident proof, the fatigue of our journey having changed her tremendously. I was young, and should my wife lose her bloom in a short time, I foresaw that this would be my despair. This was reasoning too much for a lover; but either from virtue, weakness, or inconstancy, I left Feltre without marrying her.

Although he confesses that he had some difficulty

[20] *Il Buon padre* sometimes called *Il Buon vecchio*, and *La Cantatrice*.

in tearing himself away from this "charming object of his first virtuous love," he acknowledges that "she possessed only beauty, and as it was already waning, his self-love became stronger than his passion."

During the autumn of 1730, he left Feltre to join his father at Bagnacavallo, a town near Ravenna, where Dr. Goldoni, who had gone there to accept "an advantageous offer" to practice medicine, lay ill of a mortal disease. On the way thither, young Carlo was cleverly plucked at faro by a card-sharper, he being "not yet cunning enough," he declares, "to foresee the tricks of *Messieurs les Escamoteurs.*"

On arriving at Bagnacavallo, he was "consoled for being swindled, by the sight of his dear parents," his father "having been fearful that he would die without seeing him." Dr. Goldoni recovered sufficiently, however, to introduce his son into the best society of his new abode, as well as to take him to Faenza, where the pair saw several comedies performed by a strolling company. On returning to Bagnacavallo, the elder Goldoni, whose "illness was of a year's standing," experienced a relapse so serious that he took to his bed, and after a fortnight, "breathed his last while recommending his dear wife to his son's protection."

Goldoni "felt keenly the loss of his father," he assures us, and he "endeavoured to console his mother, who in turn tried to comfort him," their first care being to return to Venice. During the journey, the widow urged her son to become a lawyer, and at

Venice so many friends and relatives joined her in these solicitations, that he was "at last obliged to yield," though he resisted, he tells us, "as long as he could."

In order to be admitted to the Venetian bar, it was necessary for him to receive his doctorate from the University of Padua, where a five-years' residence was required of students of Venetian birth, foreigners alone being permitted "to present themselves and defend their theses without delay." Both Goldoni and his father were born in Venice, but they were of Modenese descent; a circumstance that enabled our dramatist to avail himself of the protection of the Duke of Modena, and be admitted to the university as a privileged foreigner.

He had studied law in a desultory way at Pavia, Udine, and Modena; yet, realizing the need of tutoring, he secured the services of Francesco Radi, a young lawyer who had been his friend during childhood. Radi was "a worthy man," although "his circumstances were entangled because of his love for gaming," a failing that soon became manifest.

The examinations at the University of Padua had been heretofore a mere farce, but the Abbé Arrighi, a Corsican professor, in an excess of zeal had just instituted reforms which, according to our young candidate, "would have destroyed the University of Padua had they been long enforced." Instead of being furnished with both questions and answers in advance of the examination, as had been custom-

ary, he was examined rigidly by Arrighi himself, before being permitted to hold his thesis before the college of doctors. He passed this preliminary test none too brilliantly, and being in considerable apprehension regarding the public examination on the morrow, he spent the afternoon in cramming assiduously; but when he sat down at his desk after supper with Radi his tutor, prepared to burn the midnight oil, his room was invaded by five young fellows armed with a pack of cards. Radi, being a gambler born, was the first to succumb to their blandishments; but Goldoni did not long withstand temptation, and not till broad daylight, when the beadle of the university brought him his academic gown, did he tear himself away from the green board, and "smarting from chagrin at the loss of both his time and his money" hasten before the college of doctors.

In spite of the night's dissipation, he held his thesis so successfully that when the votes were taken, the registrar announced that he had been made a licentiate without a dissenting voice, even Arrighi, the Corsican, being "well satisfied." "I was born lucky," he says, "and whenever I have not been so, the fault has been entirely my own," but on this occasion luck certainly prevented a fault from undoing him.

Borrowing sufficient money to reach Venice, he hastened there, highly elated by his success, and was received in the loving arms of his proud mother and

aunt; but before he could begin the practice of law, he was obliged, according to the Venetian regulations, to study the forms and practices of the bar in a law office for two years. His uncle Indric, the barrister, obtained a berth for him in the office of "one of the best pleaders in the republic," and again his luck served him; since owing to the carelessness of the authorities who examined his papers, within eight months he was permitted to be presented in court. After making "so many bows and contortions that his back was almost broken and his wig resembled the mane of a lion," he was finally admitted to the Venetian bar.

A briefless barrister, he began to seek clients. One day while he was "building castles in Spain," he was accosted by "a fair, round, and plump woman of about thirty," who, after telling him that she had made the fortune of "a good dozen of the most famous advocates at the bar of Venice," proceeded to tempt him with some shady cases, for the conduct of which he would be well paid. "My good woman," he answered, "I am young, and entering on my career; yet the desire for work and the itch for pleading will never induce me to undertake such evil cases as you propose, for I am a man of honour." Seeing she could not corrupt him, she admonished him to be "always prudent and always honourable," and left him "lost in astonishment" at her sudden change of heart, till he learned that she was a government spy who had been sent to sound his integrity.

No longer a precocious child, or a prankish student, he had embraced at the age of twenty-five, the "lucrative and honourable" profession of the law and had withstood its first temptation. Still he questioned whether he had acted wisely, his "stars having perpetually thwarted his projects." They had led him, too, into many pitfalls, and shown him more of evil ways than a young man of his age ought in all conscience to have seen. Yet his youth, though unseemly, had been an invaluable school of experience for the life-work which he was soon to undertake; for though he had acceded to his mother's wishes, "Thalia," to quote his own words, "expected him in her temple and led him to it through many a crooked path, making him endure the thorns and the briers before yielding him any of the flowers."

II

THE VAGABONDIZING INSTINCT

ALTHOUGH Thalia expected him in her temple, at no time in his long life was Goldoni so indifferent to her allurements as at the moment when he became a Venetian lawyer. With a doting mother dependent upon him, he had acceded to her wishes and was now a member of a profession so honourable that "even a patrician would not hesitate to embrace it"; and he hoped that "perseverance and probity would lead him to the temple of fortune," instead of to Thalia's shrine. "I had been admitted to the bar," he says, "and the next thing was to procure clients"; yet no one sought his advice, except "a few curious persons who wished to sound him, or shufflers of a dangerous sort," that being "the lot," as he adds, "of all beginners."

"Truth has always been my favourite virtue," he says in the preface to his memoirs, and being forced "to pass many hours alone in his office," he had an abundance of time in which to realize the truth regarding himself. Although he had held a thesis successfully after a night of dissipation, he had done little of which he might be truly proud. He had decamped from one college and had been expelled from

another; his love affairs had been mostly of a scandalous nature, and he had shown a propensity for gambling, while more than once he had returned to the parental roof a prodigal, seeking forgiveness; yet, in spite of faults he shared with the majority of the Venetians of his day, he was both frank and kind, and never "too proud to help a friend." Being "neither lucky enough to call himself virtuous, nor unlucky enough to be carried away by evil conduct," truth was, indeed, his surpassing virtue. The pages of his candid memoirs teem with self-condemnation, as well as with honest vanity, few autobiographers having equalled him in frankness.

An easy-going child of an easy-going age, Goldoni possessed what Mr. Howells calls "the vagabondizing instinct"; [1] yet in the words of that benign writer, "no kindlier creature seems ever to have lived, and he had traits of genuine modesty that made him truly lovable." In youth and early manhood, the vagabondizing instinct obsessed him, for although imbued with "the best intentions in the world of devoting himself to the thing that interested him," that thing was the stage, and from the moment he ran away from Rimini with Florindo's troupe, and the soubrette aroused in him "a strange sensation," Thalia expected him in her temple.

Though he frequented the law courts in hope that "his face might prove sympathetic to some one with a cause to plead," that face was far too jovial to in-

[1] *Memoirs of Carlo Goldoni*, translated from the original French by John Black, with an essay by William D. Howells.

spire the confidence of serious clients; therefore, as the theatres of Venice were closed for the summer, to make the time that hung heavily on his idle hands less wearisome, he wrote an almanac,[2] the criticisms and pleasantries of which were of a comic nature, he informs us, "while each prognostication might have furnished the subject for a comedy."

"Seized with a desire to return to his old project" of writing comedies, he "sketched a few pieces," but, "reflecting that comedy did not harmonize with the dignity of his gown," he became "guilty of a breach of fidelity to Thalia, by enlisting under the standard of Melpomene," for during the days when "his office brought him in nothing," and he was "under the necessity of turning his time to some account," he wrote *Amalasontha* (*Amalasunta*), a tragedy for music, destined, as will be seen, to meet a tragic fate.

Although he was "well pleased with his labour" and "found people to whom the reading of it appeared to give satisfaction," a law case his uncle Indric had obtained for him, caused him to forswear Melpomene, as well as Thalia, for the time being, and appear in a court of law, a barrister in full standing. Though opposed by Carlo Cordellina, "the most learned and eloquent man at the Venetian bar," our young lawyer's "facts were so convincing," he informs us, and "his reasoning was so good, his voice so sonorous, and his eloquence so pleasing," that after

[2] *L'Esperienza del passato, Astrologo dell' avvenire, Almanacco critico per l'anno 1732*, published anonymously at Venice, 1732.

speaking for two hours and being "bathed in perspiration from head to foot," he won his case, and was assured by his lawyer uncle that henceforth he would never lack for clients, "it being apparent to all that he was a man destined to make his mark in the world." Luckily for posterity, however, the career at the bar thus auspiciously begun was cut short by one of those "inanities and absurdities that were ever crossing his path to stop and hinder the best intentions in the world," a farcical love affair being the cause of a sudden change in his fortune.

His mother had become intimate, it appears, with a "Madame St. ——, and a "Mademoiselle Mar ——," two sisters living in separate apartments, yet under the same roof. Though forty, Mademoiselle Mar —— was still "fresh as a rose, white as snow, and agreeably plump," and as she was rich, Goldoni decided it would be to his advantage to marry her; therefore, he enlisted his mother in his cause, she promising to make the customary parental advances. Though "the lovers understood each other," Madame Goldoni moved very cautiously, and meanwhile an ugly daughter of Madame St. —— began to use her roguish black eyes on the young lawyer so effectively, that Mademoiselle Mar —— became jealous of her niece, and to show her displeasure began to receive the attentions of a patrician fortune-hunter. "Seeing himself deprived of the place of honour he had occupied," Goldoni, in pique, began to make love to the niece, and became so completely ena-

moured of his "ugly mistress," that he drew up "a marriage contract, regular and formal in every respect," by the terms of which he was to be endowed with all the young lady's income while her mother's diamonds were to be given to her.

Although he thus proved himself an able solicitor, in both a legal and an amorous sense, he continued to flirt with Mademoiselle Mar ——, the aunt, whose patrician suitor, meanwhile, had asked for the half of her fortune as a marriage settlement, and the bequeathal of the other half upon her death. These demands appeared modest in comparison with those Goldoni had imposed upon her niece; yet Mademoiselle Mar —— was seized with such "transports of rage, hatred, and contempt" that she gave her noble suitor the mitten. Although she "almost died of grief," she recovered sufficiently to endeavour to bring Goldoni to her feet once more; the part he then played being "perfidious," in his opinion.

His perfidy seems trivial, however, in comparison with the dual fortune hunt in which he had engaged, since it consisted in an offence no more heinous than the writing of some love verses which were set to music by a friend and sung by a professional singer before the door of the apartment house in which both lady-loves dwelt. Each thought the serenade a tribute to her own charms, and the upshot was that Goldoni, being forced to declare himself, eschewed the aunt and accepted the niece. But in spite of the advan-

tageous contract he had drawn, the fortune of his "ugly mistress" did not materialize, since it consisted solely in the expectation of "one of those life annuities destined by the republic for a certain number of the daughters of impoverished patricians," of whom Goldoni's fiancée was fourth in the line of succession. Moreover, her mother refused to part with her diamonds during her own lifetime. Goldoni's law practice yielded him nothing and he had contracted debts, therefore he saw himself "standing on the brink of a precipice"; but after sustaining "a distressing conflict between love and reason, the latter faculty gained at last a complete dominion over his senses."

His mother mortgaged her property to pay his debts; yet, despite the fact that he had just made a successful début in court "amid the acclamations of the bar," she agreed with him that "in order to avoid ruin, some violent resolution was absolutely necessary"; therefore he decided to flee from Venice. Leaving "his country, his relatives, his friends, his love, his hopes, and his profession," he left, too, a letter for the mother of his betrothed, in which he promised to return and wed her daughter, whenever the conditions of the marriage contract should be fulfilled; then taking to the high-road with his "treasure," the turgid manuscript of *Amalasontha,* he turned vagabond steps toward Lombardy, in the fond hope of selling that lyrical tragedy to the opera at Milan for a hundred sequins.

On the way thither, he stopped a few days at Vicenza, where he read *Amalasontha* to Count Trissino of the family of the renaissance poet of that name. Though wisely advised by this scion of a poetic house to be constant to Thalia, he fared on to Verona, with the hope of meeting Scipione Maffei, a dramatist, who was then striving vainly to elevate the Italian stage; but failing to find this patrician author on the banks of the Adige, he took the Brescia road. Meeting at Desenzano a friendly priest who was journeying to Salò, he accompanied him to that lakeside town, for the purpose of collecting the rents of a house his mother owned there, he being, as he says, "very short of money." As his mother had mortgaged her property to pay his debts, she must have been short of money, too; yet he pocketed her rents without compunction. Journeying on to Brescia, he read *Amalasontha* to the governor's assessor and a party of his friends, who "listened to it attentively and applauded it unanimously"; yet to this judicious assembly, the young author's style appeared more adapted to tragedy than opera; therefore, he was advised to suppress the lyrics, and make *Amalasontha* purely a tragedy.

Scorning this sage counsel, he started for Milan, confident that its opera would soon vindicate him. At Bergamo, he tarried long enough to borrow ten sequins from the governor of that craggy city and obtain from his wife letters of introduction to persons of influence in Milan, their excellencies being

none other than the Podestà of Chioggia and his consort, whose praises Goldoni had sung in verse while holding in that town the office of coadjutor's assistant. Having thus received back the bread he had once cast upon the waters of courtesy, he hastened to Milan, where he alighted at a famous inn, because, as he says, "when you wish to show yourself to advantage, you must appear rich, even when not so." Upon presenting to Orazio Bartolini, the Venetian minister resident, the letter of introduction given him by the wife of the governor of Bergamo, he was received by that diplomat in "a most frank and encouraging way." Bartolini laughed heartily at Goldoni's recital of the story of the amorous mishap that led him to flee from Venice, and offered to assist him financially; but the young wanderer still possessed a few of the governor of Bergamo's sequins as well as his precious *Amalasontha;* therefore he declined this generous offer, and went forth hopefully to present his lyrical tragedy to the management of the opera.

Both Caffariello, the leading tenor, and Madame Grossatesta, the *première danseuse,* were Venetians with whom he was already acquainted, and through the kind offices of the latter, he met the principal singers of the opera, as well as Count Francesco Prata, one of its directors, who forthwith invited him to read *Amalasontha* to the company assembled in La Grossatesta's drawing-room. Goldoni's account of this reading paints so vividly the vain ways of stage folk, that the reader familiar with theatrical

life should enjoy its description of the ruthless way in which his hopes were crushed:

A small table and a candle were brought, round which we seated ourselves, and I began to read. I announced the title as *Amalasontha,* whereupon Caffariello sang the word Amalasontha. It was long and to him it seemed ridiculous; everybody laughed, but I did not laugh; the lady of the house scolded; the nightingale became silent. I read the names of the characters, of whom there were nine, and at this the small voice of an old male soprano who sang in the chorus and mewed like a cat, was heard to say: "Too many, too many, there are at least two characters too many." I realized that I was ill at ease, and wished to stop the reading. Silencing this insolent fellow, who had not the talent of Caffariello to excuse him, M. Prata turned to me and said: "It is true, sir, that ordinarily there are but six or seven characters in an opera, but when a work is deserving of it, we gladly incur the expense of two additional actors. Be so kind, if you please, as to continue the reading."

I resumed my reading: "Act first, scene first; Clodesile and Arpagon," whereupon M. Caffariello asked me the name of the leading tenor part in my opera. "Sir," said I, "it is Clodesile." "What!" he replied, "you open with the principal artist, you have him enter when everybody is being seated and making a noise! Egad, I am not your man." (What patience!) Here M. Prata interrupted. "Let us see," said he, "if the scene is interesting!" I read the first scene, and while I was reciting my verses, an impotent weakling drew a manuscript from his pocket and, going to the harpsichord, began to rehearse a song from his part. The hostess made endless excuses; taking me by the hand, M. Prata led me to a boudoir, remote from the main room, and seating himself beside me, M. le Comte pacified me regarding the ill conduct of a company of giddy brains, and at the same time begged me to read my drama to him alone, in order that he might judge it and tell me his sincere opinion.

After the budding author had read his play "from

the first verse to the last," the Count, who had "listened patiently," pointed out its innumerable defects in a spirit both kindly and wise.

Overcome with chagrin by Count Prata's criticism, Goldoni returned, crestfallen, to his lodging, and refusing to sup, ordered a fire. "My piece is good," he exclaimed, his "treasure" still in his trembling hand. "I am certain of it; but the theatre is bad; and the actors, actresses, composers, and scene-painters—may the devil take them all! And thou, unlucky production, that hast cost me so much labour and deceived my hopes and expectations, I consign thee to devouring flames."

Having pronounced this requiem, he threw *Amalasontha* into the fire, and watching it burn with "a sort of cool complacency," stirred the ashes; then ordering supper, he "ate heartily and drank still more," whereupon he went to bed "and enjoyed a profound sleep." On the morrow, he awoke two hours earlier than usual, and "plucking up courage," paid his respects to the Venetian minister, who on hearing the tale of his discomfiture, forthwith attached him to his staff, in the quality of a gentleman of the chamber. His official duties being chiefly to "pay complimentary calls upon travelling Venetians of noble birth, or to wait upon the Governor and magistrates of Milan in the business of the Republic," Goldoni found himself, as he confesses, "rather a gainer than a loser by the failure which he had sustained."

Having considerable time at his disposal in which

"to amuse himself or do as he pleased," he met during these idle hours a charlatan named Buonafede Vitali, whose *nom de guerre* was The Anonymous (*L'Anonimo*). Born of a good family and educated as a Jesuit, "this singular man," as Goldoni styles him, "to whom no science was unknown," was a quack dispenser of opiates and drugs like L'Oriétan and Bary, the famous *opérateurs* whom Molière saw on the Pont-Neuf during his youth; like them, too, he employed a troupe of buffoons to attract customers.

For the purpose of studying his character, Goldoni consulted The Anonymous, but the quack quickly discovered that curiosity and not illness had brought the young Venetian to his booth; therefore, he prescribed a cup of chocolate as "the most suitable remedy for his disease"; and soon these two wanderers with "the vagabondizing instinct" were cronies. By obtaining, through the influence of the Venetian minister, an engagement at the Milan theatre for the buffoons of The Anonymous, Goldoni did this charlatan a good turn, and as the future dramatist wrote, for performance during this engagement, *The Venetian Gondolier* (*Il Gondoliere veneziano*), a musical interlude which was "the first of his comedy efforts to appear in public," The Anonymous was the first manager to produce one of his plays, a distinction whereby his name survives his quackery. Moreover, an actor in this charlatan's company, named Gaetano Casali, gave Goldoni his first serious commission, for when "a detestable piece," called *Belis-*

arius (*Belisario*), was produced at the Milan theatre during the engagement of The Anonymous's troupe, the young playwright analysed its faults so indisputably, that Casali, who expected to appear shortly on the Venetian stage, persuaded him to undertake the making of "a good piece out of a bad one." A few days later, Goldoni read to Casali the first act of his own version of *Belisarius,* that Thespian being delighted with it; but before the aspiring author could finish his tragi-comedy, several events transpired to divert his mind into channels remote from the drama.

There were rumours of war in Lombardy, and the Venetian minister, upon being called home on private business, charged his young gentleman of the chamber with the writing of a daily letter regarding the political situation. The importance of this duty lay so lightly on Goldoni's shoulders, however, that he soon became enmeshed in the toils of an adventuress.

While lunching at a suburban inn with a friend named Carrara, he saw a pretty girl in a window and learned from the landlord that she was a Venetian who had come to his hostelry a few days before, accompanied by a gentleman of "respectable appearance," who had since disappeared. Thinking this fair compatriot might be in distress, Goldoni knocked at her door, and on being admitted, listened to a pathetic tale, told amid a flood of tears, while Carrara —wise man of the world—stood in the doorway, laughing. The lady gave her name as Margherita

Biondi, though the credulous knight-errant afterwards learned that this was not her real name. She was of good birth, she told him, but having fallen in love with a man of superior station, his family had opposed their marriage so assiduously, that, aided by a maternal uncle who adored her, she had eloped with her patrician lover. She had been pursued; but though her uncle had been captured and thrown into prison, she had escaped to Milan with her lover, who, alas, had gone out on the morning after their arrival, and had never returned.

Goldoni was so affected by "the gushing tears of this languishing beauty," that he forthwith hired a furnished apartment for her, and began to use his diplomatic influence to the end of obtaining her uncle's release from prison. "He could refuse her nothing," he confesses, and he "visited her frequently"; but his good fortune was of short duration, since his servant burst into his room one morning with the exciting news that "fifteen thousand Savoyards, horse and foot, had taken possession of Milan and were drawn up in the cathedral square." "We were at the commencement of the War of 1733," he says, "called the War of Don Carlos,[3] and the King of Sar-

[3] During the War of the Polish Succession (1733-1735), the allied French and Sardinian armies, commanded by the veteran Marshal Villars, entered Milan, then an Austrian possession, on the night of Nov. 3, 1733, and after possessing themselves of the town, laid siege to the citadel, which capitulated on Jan. 2, 1734. Don Carlos (afterwards King Charles III of Spain), the prince of whom Goldoni here speaks, was the son of Philip V of Spain by his second wife, Elizabeth Farnese, an Italian, for whom the Duchy of Parma had been created by the Pope.

dinia, having declared himself for that Prince, had united his forces with those of France and Spain, against the house of Austria." Goldoni's chief thought, however, was not of the politics that had caused the invasion of Milan, but of the safety of Margherita Biondi, for when the Franco-Sardinian army laid siege to the citadel, the street where she dwelt was within the range of shot and shell. "I confided her," he tells us, "to the care of a Genoese merchant, in whose house I could only see her in the midst of a numerous and excessively punctilious family."

When the Venetian Legation was removed shortly thereafter to Crema, a frontier town, the young attaché was obliged to say farewell to his fair Venetian, "who wept on hearing the news, and seemed quite inconsolable." His first care, on arriving at Crema, was to visit the jail where her supposed uncle—a *chevalier d'industrie* named Scacciati—was confined; but he had already departed, Goldoni's efforts having secured his release. From his friend Carrara, our young Venetian learned that the rogue had joined Margherita in Milan. "In delivering over to him a girl who was a burden to you, and by no means deserving of your care, I have rendered you

As her step-son, Don Ferdinand, was still living and therefore heir to the throne of Spain, this ambitious queen desired a crown for Don Carlos, her own son. In 1720, Sicily and Naples had been ceded to Austria, but as an outcome of the War of the Polish Succession, Don Carlos obtained through the efforts of his ambitious mother and his own military valour, the crown of the kingdom of the Two Sicilies; hence in Italy this war was known as the War of Don Carlos.

a useful service," wrote Carrara; and "at a distance from this enchanting object," says Goldoni, "I owned that my friend had conducted himself with great propriety."

Being dissatisfied with the behaviour of his secretary, the Venetian minister installed Goldoni in his stead, and for a few months this susceptible young man discharged his official duties satisfactorily. When Pizzighettone, a town in the neighbourhood of Crema, was besieged, he was sent during an armistice to the camp of the allies, "in the quality of an honourable spy." The observations he made while there were to be used profitably by him, some twenty-seven years later, as the inspiration of a spirited comedy.[4] Meanwhile he enjoyed the festivities he thus describes:

> A bridge thrown over the breach afforded a communication between the besiegers and the besieged; tables were laid everywhere, and the officers entertained one another. Both without and within, under tents and in bowers, balls, banquets, and concerts were given. All the inhabitants of the neighbourhood flocked there, on foot, on horseback and in carriages; provisions arrived from every quarter; abundance was established instantly, while charlatans and mountebanks did not fail to hurry thither; it was a charming fair, a delightful resort.

When Pizzighettone surrendered, the theatre of the war moved farther south, whereupon Goldoni's diplomatic labours were so lightened that he found time to finish his tragi-comedy *Belisarius*. Then Gian Paolo, his brother, appeared at Crema to af-

[4] *La Guerra.*

flict him. Upon the death of the soldier who had taken charge of his military education, this ne'er-do-well had resigned from the Venetian service, and having failed in his efforts to obtain a commission in the army of the Duke of Modena, he besought his brother's help; but no sooner had Goldoni obtained for him his own former post of gentleman of the chamber, than Gian Paolo began to quarrel with the minister. Being promptly dismissed, he took his leave "in a very ill humour," Goldoni says, "and his bad conduct so injured me in the mind of the minister, that he never afterward showed me the same kindness and friendship."

Yet the young diplomat's own delinquencies were not inconsequential. One day when engaged in copying a state paper, he heard a knock at his door, his visitor being Scacciati, the pseudo-uncle of Margherita Biondi. On learning that this fair quean was at a neighbouring inn, he hurriedly finished his work, then spent the night in revelry. Discovering his absence, his chief accused him of having gone forth to sell the secrets of the document he had copied to a rival diplomat, the fact that he had been carousing instead, being considered no palliation. As young Goldoni was "unwilling to expose himself to more such unpleasant scenes," he resigned his secretaryship and departed in a humble hired chaise for Modena, where his mother then resided. Once more, his treasure was a tragedy, for he took with him the manuscript of *Belisarius*.

At Parma he witnessed a battle between the Allies and the Austrians (June 29, 1734), which he describes graphically in his memoirs, "the most horrible and disgusting spectacle," to his mind, being the field on the following day, where thousands of bodies, stripped by ghouls during the night, "lay naked in heaps." The road to Modena being infested by the stragglers of both armies, he left the Parmesan battle-field for Brescia, accompanied by a young priest who "loved the stage." Author-like, Goldoni "took care to mention *Belisarius,*" and was reading it aloud to his sacerdotal companion when their chaise was suddenly halted by five armed men in military uniform, who forthwith proceeded to despoil the budding dramatist of his "purse, watch, and small box," the priest "being treated in like manner."

While these military highwaymen were ransacking the baggage, the driver whipped up his horses and escaped. Regardless of what might befall the priest, Goldoni meanwhile took to flight as well, happy in the fact that he had "saved *Belisarius* from the wreck." Running until he fell exhausted by a stream, its "delicious water" so revived him that he managed to reach some peasants he saw labouring in a field. They proved to be kindly men, who shared their humble evening meal with him, and one of their number conducted him to Casal Pusterlengo,[5] a town in the neighbourhood of Lodi, where he found cheer and a lodging beneath the hospitable roof of the

[5] Erroneously called Casal Pasturlengò by Goldoni.

parish priest. His literary ardour, however, was not dampened by these mishaps, since on the following evening he read *Belisarius* to an audience composed of priests and villagers who "proved by their applause that his work was suited to every capacity and equally capable of pleasing the learned and the ignorant."

Profuse in his compliments, his amiable host lent Goldoni a horse and a servant, but when he reached Brescia he was penniless. In his hour of need, he met Scacciati in the street, who proved himself a grateful rogue, since he loaned him six sequins and refused to take his note of hand. Scacciati's pseudo-niece was at Brescia, too, and needless to say, she received Goldoni with open arms. Moreover, she told him the story of her life, which he thus relates:

> Scacciati was not her uncle, but a knave who had carried her off from her parents and sold her to a rich man, who left her within two months, after having paid the broker more handsomely than the lady. She was tired of living with this drone, who spent profusely what she gained with repugnance. . . . She wished to get rid of him and asked my advice regarding the execution of her project. Had I been rich, I should have freed her from her tyrant; but in my present circumstances I could give her no other advice than to apply to her relatives, and seek to be reconciled with those who had a right to reclaim her.

Though unconscionable, these adventurers were kind to Goldoni. Besides loaning him money, they gave him a night's lodging and a meal; but he refused their invitation to tarry in Brescia, and on the

morrow he set out for Verona. "I saw the lady some years later," he says, "very well married in Venice; but M. Scacciati finished his career by being sentenced to the galleys."

At Verona, the tide of Goldoni's ill fortunes turned. A theatrical company was playing there on a temporary stage erected in the Roman amphitheatre; and being attracted thither by the play-bills, to his joy he recognized in the actor who addressed the public before the performance, the Casali who had commissioned him to write *Belisarius*. Making his way to the stage, he was warmly greeted by Casali, who introduced him to Giuseppe Imer, the manager, "a man of intellect and information who was passionately fond of comedy." Imer's company played during the autumn and winter at the San Samuele theatre in Venice, belonging to a patrician family, named Grimani, and at Casali's instigation Goldoni was invited to read *Belisarius* to this metropolitan troupe.[6]

"My play was listened to with attention," he tells us, and at the conclusion "the applause was general and complete." "Imer took me by the hand," he continues, "and in a magisterial tone said, 'Bravo!' while Casali exclaimed, 'M. Goldoni did me the honour to labour for me.'" When the members of this troupe learned that *The Singer* (*La Cantatrice*),[7] a

[6] It is interesting to note that Zanetta (Maria Giovanna) Casanova, mother of the arch-adventurer of that name, was a member of Imer's troupe at this time.

[7] According to Goldoni, *La Cantatrice* had been plagiarized by a young Venetian lawyer named Gori, and put forth as his own work.

musical interlude they had been giving successfully, had been written by Goldoni at Feltre, four years previously, they needed no further proof of his "qualities as a dramatic poet." *Belisarius* was accepted forthwith, and as a mark of the manager's "particular gratitude," its author received a present of six sequins, which he despatched to Scacciati, in repayment of the loan that rogue had made him.

"Such is my system," he says. "I have always endeavoured to avoid meanness; yet I have never been proud. I have helped, whenever it lay in my power to do so, those who were in need of my assistance. Moreover, I have received help without embarrassment and have even asked for it unblushingly whenever I needed it."

Goldoni reached Verona in the summer (1734), and at the end of September he departed for Venice with Imer and his troupe; meanwhile he had written the libretto of a musical interlude,[8] and before the company left Verona, the parts of *Belisarius* had been distributed. Indeed, that summer marks the commencement of his career as a professional dramatist, *The Venetian Gondolier,* a pretty trifle he had written for The Anonymous, being merely its prologue. At Milan he was a dilettante writing for pleasure; whereas at Verona he was a penniless vagabond seeking a livelihood.

Upon reaching Venice, Goldoni learned that his mother, who was still at Modena, had paid "nearly

[8] *La Pupilla.*

all his debts." He feared, however, that Madame St. —— and her daughter might still entertain matrimonial designs regarding him, till his aunt assured him that "these high-minded ladies, on learning that he had entered into an engagement with a troupe of actors, had pronounced him unworthy to approach them."

His mind being thus relieved, he was able to work untrammelled at his new profession. Meeting Michele Grimani, one of five brothers who owned the San Samuele theatre, he was received by him "with great kindness," and engaged to work for the troupe of which Imer was the head; whereupon he began the composition of *Rosamond* (*Rosmonda*), a tragedy, and *The Scamp* (*La Birba*), an interlude inspired by the impostors he had seen duping the public in the Piazza San Marco. "The comic traits I made use of in my interludes were so much seed," he says, "sowed by me in my field, in order that I might some day gather ripe and agreeable fruit"; yet, ere he garnered that delightful harvest, his field was parched by dry tragedy and all but laid waste.

On the twenty-fourth of November (1734), *Belisarius* was produced at the San Samuele theatre with such success that "some of the actors wept, while others laughed, from the same feeling of joy." Moreover, when a different play was announced for the following evening, the audience demanded *Belisarius;* yet he who reads this dull tragi-comedy to-day can but wonder at this enthusiasm, so turgid are its

pompous lines. This play, however, scored phenomenally, although *Rosamond,* its successor, had to be sustained after four performances by the merriment of *The Scamp.* Goldoni had made a distinct impression in the theatrical world of Venice, nevertheless, and soon was engaged by Grimani to rewrite the libretto of *Griselda,* an opera by Zeno and Pariati, the music to be written by the Abbé Vivaldi, known as *il prete rosso,* because of his red hair.

When the young dramatist conferred with this priest regarding the changes to be made in *Griselda,* he found him "surrounded by music and with a breviary in his hand." Whenever there was a lull in the conversation, Vivaldi, making the sign of the cross, resumed his breviary, then walking about, he cited psalms and hymns; yet he became, nevertheless, so impressed by Goldoni's lyrics, that he embraced him when they parted, and vowed he would never collaborate with any other poet.

During the summer of 1735, which he spent travelling with Imer's troupe on the mainland, Goldoni made a versified tragedy of *Griselda,* as a vehicle for an actress known as La Romana, and at Udine wrote *The Foundation of Venice* (*La Fondazione di Venezia*) which he describes as "perhaps the first opéra comique that had ever appeared in the Venetian States." [9] However, as these early dramatic efforts are

[9] The first opéra comique produced in the Venetian States was *Elisa,* libretto by Domenico Lalli, music by Giovan Maria Ruggeri (1711), and given at the Sant' Angelo. See *Scherillo: La prima commedia musicale a Venezia, in Giorn. stor. della Lett. ital.* (1883).

considered in an ensuing chapter, they shall give place for the moment to their author's love affairs, of which there were several to harass him during his engagement with Imer's troupe, the proximity of pretty actresses making him fall an easy victim to their wiles.

The first of these to whom he paid court assiduously was Antonia Ferramonti, whom he styles "a charming actress, very beautiful, very amiable, and very intelligent." He was "not long in discerning her merits," he tells us, and like many another iniquitous admirer of a wife, he cultivated her husband's friendship. On the way to Udine, instead of accepting the invitation of Imer, the manager, to travel with him, he "set out in an excellent carriage with Madame Ferramonti and the good man, her husband," and although he met in that mountain town the lemonade-vender's daughter from whose amorous toils he had fled nine years previously, he had "no desire," he assures us, "to sacrifice for her his new inclination." His affair with La Ferramonti was short-lived, however, for she died at Udine in childbirth (August, 1735),[10] Goldoni being so distracted by grief that he "could no longer remain in that town, or endure the sight of the women who delighted in his affliction"; therefore he set out for Venice with the avowed purpose of meeting his mother, who had returned meanwhile from Modena. From her he learned that his Venetian property was now disencumbered and his Modena revenues increased.

[10] L. Rasi. *I Comici italiani.*

Moreover, his brother had re-entered the army; the family fortunes were mending.

Goldoni's mother wished him to resume the practice of the law, but he assured her that "play-writing was quite as honourable a career." Though she pleaded "with tears in her eyes," she left him free to choose his own profession; so, when Imer's troupe returned to Venice toward the end of September, he resumed his duties as playwright. But love, alas, soon made sport of him, for in that troupe was a soubrette with whom he had already philandered at Udine, Elisabetta Moreri d'Afflisio by name, whose pseudonym was La Passalacqua.

When Goldoni called on her at Venice, at her urgent bidding, she was dressed, he tells us, "like a nymph of Cythera." Being "on his guard," he withstood her wiles for a while, with "heroic self-denial." "Besides, I did not like her," he adds; "she was too thin, her eyes were too green, and her pale and yellow complexion was covered with an abundance of paint." By appealing to his vanity, however, instead of to his affection, she played her part cleverly, her reason for wishing to see him having been, so she told him, a desire to secure professional advice from a man of "his talent and intelligence." Yet, when he tried to depart, she seized his arm and led him to her gondola, this being his account of their departure for Cythera:

> How could I refuse to follow her? Therefore we entered this

vehicle, which is as snug as the most charming boudoir. We made for the middle of the vast lagoon that surrounds the City of Venice. There our skilful gondolier drew the small back curtain, made a rudder of his oar, and allowed his gondola to drift at the pleasure of the waves.

We shall draw the curtain also on that "lover's hour," as it was called by this tactful gondolier, and shift the scene of the comedy to La Passalacqua's boudoir. There Goldoni played the rôle of injured lover, a handsome actor named Vitalba having been the cause of his jealousy. The dramatist had left "the faithless woman," he avers, "without intending to complain," but "she wrote him a touching and pathetic letter," and "whether from curiosity or a wish to give vent to his rage," he decided to see her once more. His own words shall describe the meeting:

I found her stretched on a sofa, her head resting on a pillow. I greeted her, but she said nothing; I asked her what she had to tell me, but she did not answer. Fire mounted to my face; anger inflamed and blinded me; I gave free vent to my indignation, and without restraint overwhelmed her with the reproaches she deserved. The actress said not a word, but now and then she dried her eyes, and as I dreaded those insidious tears, I sought to leave. "Go, sir," she told me in a trembling voice, "my mind is made up; you shall have news of me in a few moments." I did not stop because of these vague words, but made my way to the door. On turning to say farewell, I saw her arm raised and a dagger she held in her hand pointed at her breast. Struck with terror at the sight, I lost my head, and running toward her, I threw myself at her feet. Wresting the dagger from her hand, I dried her tears, forgave everything, promised everything, and remained. We dined together, and . . . we were on our former footing.

Though Goldoni "seriously loved" La Passalacqua for a while, and was convinced that she loved him, too, he soon learned that she and Vitalba "dined and supped together, and laughed at his simplicity." In revenge for this infidelity, he portrayed her ruthlessly in his first sustained comedy, entitled *Don Juan Tenorio; or, The Debauchee* (*Don Giovanni Tenorio, o sia Il Dissoluto*), a piece that soon appeared upon the Venetian boards and ran "without interruption" until Shrove Tuesday (1736), with La Passalacqua reluctantly playing Elisa, a part in which she had not been slow to recognize a portrait of herself. She had protested that she would not appear in this comedy, unless essential changes were made in her rôle; yet, actress-like, on being told that she must play it as the author had written it, or leave the company, "she instantly resolved to outbrave every other consideration"; therefore, "she learned and recited her part in the most perfect manner."

A year afterward both Vitalba and La Passalacqua left the company. Goldoni bore the latter "no ill will," he tells us, yet he "felt better when he did not see her." Meanwhile, he had met romantically on a journey he made to Genoa with Imer's troupe, the girl who became his faithful helpmate during his long and eventful life. In that city, he won a prize of a hundred pistoles in a lottery, "but there a greater piece of good fortune came to me," he says, "since I married a wise, virtuous, and charming young lady, who made up for all the tricks other women had

played me, and reconciled me to the fair sex"—with which he had never really been at odds.

The name of this exemplary girl was Maria Nicoletta Connio, her father being Agostino Connio, one of the four notaries of an important bank. He was "a respectable man," his son-in-law informs us, "of some fortune, but having a very large family, he was not in as easy circumstances as he should have been." His wife, Angela Benedetta, bore this "most worthy gentleman, this excellent father and dutiful citizen,"[11] eight children, the eldest daughter being Maria Nicoletta, or "good Nicoletta," as she is familiarly called by Goldoni's Italian biographers. At the time of her future husband's advent in Genoa, Nicoletta was nineteen years of age, Goldoni being then twenty-nine. His words shall tell of their meeting:

> The manager and I lodged in a house adjoining the theatre, and I had noticed opposite my casement a young lady who appeared to me to be quite pretty, and whose acquaintance I was anxious to make. One day when she was alone in her window, I greeted her somewhat tenderly; whereupon she dipped me a courtesy, but disappeared immediately and did not show herself again.

His "curiosity was excited" and his "pride piqued," he continues: therefore, he took pains to learn the young lady's name, then borrowed a note Imer had received for the rent of a theatre box, which he presented for payment to Agostino Connio,

[11] Preface to Vol. XV of the Pasquali edition; Hermann von Löhner, *Mémoires de Goldoni.*

at the bank where he was employed, and by this subterfuge managed to scrape an acquaintance with him. Having seen Goldoni's plays performed, Connio hobnobbed with him at coffee-houses, then invited him to his house, where he met the fair Nicoletta, and within a month he had asked her hand in marriage, in the manner he thus describes:

> Having perceived my inclinations, Connio was in no way surprised, and he had no apprehension of a refusal on the part of the young lady; but like a wise and prudent man, he requested a little time; whereupon he wrote to the Genoese consul at Venice for information regarding my character.

The information proved highly satisfactory; therefore, when he had obtained from his mother the necessary legal documents for a marriage beyond the confines of his native state, as well as her consent, Goldoni was wedded to pretty Nicoletta (Aug. 23, 1736). During the ceremony at the house of the bride, he had felt feverish, and at the service in the church of San Sisto on the following day, he became so faint that he was obliged to retire to the sacristy. That night, which, in his own words, "should have been so joyful," he became ill of the smallpox for the second time, that fell disease having assailed him at Rimini sixteen years before. "I was not dangerously ill," he says, "and I became no uglier than I was before; yet my poor wife shed many a tear over my pillow, she being then, as she has ever been, my chief consolation." Imer's troupe had gone to Florence

meanwhile, so when he had recovered, Goldoni set out for Venice with his wife. "Oh, heavens!" he exclaims, "what tears were shed! What a cruel parting for my wife! All at once she left her father, mother, brothers, sisters, uncles, and aunts . . . but she went with her husband."

At Venice, the young couple "disembarked in the parish of Santa Maria Mater Domini, at a house by the bridge of the same name," and there they dwelt "in perfect accord," with Goldoni's mother and aunt, "all being peace and harmony," and our dramatist "the happiest man in the world." Although he owed these blessings "to his virtuous consort," the house at Santa Maria Mater Domini proved too small for even so amiable a family; therefore he soon rented "one of the new houses of the Degna in the street called La Salizada a San Lio," where he dwelt happily with good Nicoletta.[12]

She was a model wife, whose fine character was thoroughly appreciated by her humoursome lord, for in dedicating one of his comedies [13] to her father, after twenty-one years of wedded life, he pays her this fervent tribute:

> Great is my obligation to you, since you could not have given me a greater treasure than you did in your exemplary daughter, my beloved consort. . . . She has ever been such a good companion that during the many years we have passed together, it has never occurred to me, either on account of domestic differences, or angry

[12] Preface to Vol. XV, Pasquali edition.
[13] *La Donna sola*, 1757.

sentiment, to regret our union. She has known how to bear tranquilly with me the hostile blows of fortune, content with every humble condition, and desirous only of the peace of which she has always been the promoter and discreet custodian. . . . She is very fond of politeness and neatness, and the mortal enemy of pomp and ambition; and combining as she does so thoroughly in herself both becoming generosity and careful economy, she has, without exciting my too easy-going tastes, provided me, day by day, with perceptible comforts.

During the first four years of Goldoni's married life (1736-1740), little happened to ruffle its serenity. He lived tranquilly in Venice with Nicoletta, wrote several pieces for Imer's troupe,[14] and his domestic happiness was undisturbed by the allurements of soubrettes. Yet he began to be inconstant to Melpomene, the success of *The Man of the World* (*L'Uomo di mondo*), a comedy he wrote to provide Francesco Collinetti, an admirable comedian of Imer's company, with a part, convincing him that "comedy was his bent, and that good comedy should be his aim." He wrote popular farces, too, to fit the talents of Antonio Sacchi, a harlequin of international repute, so gradually Thalia enticed him toward her shrine during those serene days.

The tranquillity of his life came to an end, however, when in December, 1740, through the influence of his wife's family, he was gazetted as

[14] *Rinaldo di Montalbano; Enrico re di Sicilia; Lucrezia romana in Constantinopoli; l'Uomo di mondo, o El Cortesan venezian; Gustavo primo, re di Svezia; Il Prodigo; Le Trendadue disgrazie d'Arlecchino; Cento e quattro accidenti in una notta, o la notta critica; Oronte re de' Sciti,* and five *drammi giocosi per musica.*

Genoese consul in Venice, an appointment which he accepted "with gratitude and respect," without asking the amount of his salary. This was "another of my follies," he laments, "for which I paid dearly." After increasing his "establishment, his table, and his retinue," in accordance with the dignity of his office, he learned that his consulship was unsalaried, though the fees netted him a small income. Moreover, in his official capacity, he became involved in financial difficulties. On behalf of his government, he had seized, it appears, some valuable goods, found in the possession of a man who had defrauded the Genoese Republic, and although he conducted the affair with "infinite honour" to himself, he entrusted the proceeds of the public sale of these goods to a broker, who pawned them to a Jew, Goldoni's father-in-law being obliged to make good the amount out of the unpaid portion of his daughter's dowry.

While dealing with these shady financiers, he wrote *The Bankruptcy* (*La Bancarotta*), a comedy that angered the sharpers of the business world; therefore, when he became implicated in a private financial transaction, he was widely accused of misappropriating six hundred ducats, though he had "no difficulty," he asserts, "in proving the contrary." To add to his troubles, war was declared (1742) by France and Spain against Austria,[15] and as the Duke

[15] The War of the Austrian Succession, during which Austria and Sardinia had become allies. Modena had been invaded in June, 1742, and on the 5th of July, the King of Sardinia, and not the Duke of Modena, as Goldoni states, had sequestered the revenues of the ducal bank. Her-

of Modena became involved in it, "to support the expenses of his army, he stopped the payment of interest on funds in the ducal bank at Modena." The residue of Goldoni's small inheritance being invested in these funds, he was unable to maintain his position in society; therefore, he resolved to set out for Modena, for "the purpose of obtaining money at all hazard." Being an official, he was forced to wait until the Genoese government would grant him a leave of absence. Meanwhile, Anna Baccherini, a married soubrette, crossed his path, "eager to display her pretty face."

To provide this lady with a vehicle suitable to her talents and charms, he wrote *The Clever Woman* (*La Donna di garbo*). This play marks a turning-point in his career, but as its dramatic attributes are considered in another chapter, it is only necessary to note here that La Baccherini died before Goldoni could enjoy the pleasure of seeing her in the title-rôle.

"What a blow for me!" he exclaims. "It was not a lover who bewailed his mistress, but an author who mourned for his favourite actress. My wife, who saw me in grief, was sensible enough to share it." He acknowledges, moreover, that he and La Baccherini had "need of each other," and that "united

mann von Löhner says, however (*Mémoires de M. Goldoni*), that "if Goldoni, while giving an inkling of the diplomatic history of his time, distorts some particulars, it may be believed that he did so through a certain prudence in speaking of political matters and princes, which will not surprise anyone familiar with the literary customs of Europe before the French Revolution."

in friendship," he "worked for her glory while she dispelled his troubles." Good Nicoletta, therefore, was a sensible wife for a dramatist with the vagabondizing instinct, since she could not have been entirely blind to this and the many other amours into which her temperamental husband was lured by ambitious soubrettes.

Meanwhile Goldoni's worthless brother, Gian Paolo, shorn once more of military rank, came to abide with him and to introduce beneath his roof a military adventurer who choused our dramatist out of the few livres that remained to him. This rogue, a Ragusan captain "who had more the appearance of a courtier than a soldier," was polite to the ladies, drank his host's wine, and told stories of his own daring. He was raising a regiment, he said, for foreign service in which Gian Paolo was to have a captaincy, and glibly he prevailed upon Goldoni to accept the post of auditor-general. Having found his kindly host thus gullible, he induced him to cash a draft he had forged on some German bankers for six thousand livres, whereupon he decamped. "All the Ragusan's dupes assembled in my house," says his victim, "but in order to avoid the indignation of the government and the ridicule of the public, we were forced to stifle our charges."

Financially straitened by this loss, and despairing of ever receiving from the Genoese government the remuneration he had asked for his services, Goldoni made up his mind to leave Venice, his in-

LOVE'S MESSENGER

Museo Correr

tention being, he says, to pass through Modena and there provide himself with the means of continuing his journey to Genoa, "in order to obtain in person favour or justice." [16] Moreover, he was being accused, though apparently unjustly, of having appropriated a sum of money that had passed through his hands,[17] so having received during the month of March permission from the Genoese government to leave Venice, he embarked during the summer of 1743 [18] for the mainland with his wife, "sad, thoughtful, and plunged in grief." A vagabond once more, he endeavoured "to dispel regret for the past, by the hope of better fortune for the future," being animated in this time of trouble by the example and advice of his good wife, who was "more reasonable than he, her only care being to consider him."

At Bologna, he tarried long enough to draw royalties from the local managers for the use of three of his comedies, and from there he went, on the advice of a Thespian friend, to Rimini, where the Duke of

[16] Preface to Vol. XVII, Pasquali edition. There is no record that he reached Genoa, fortuitous events having apparently altered his plans.

[17] Fifteen hundred ducats he had received under Imer's power of attorney from Francesco Maria Berio, the former's kinsman of Naples, and it was believed that Goldoni had left Venice, still owing that sum to Imer. "But," Goldoni adds, "I can give the lie to this shameful indignity with two receipts, one from Messrs. Maruzzi Brothers in the sum of 620 ducats, and the other from Imer himself for the amount in full, less expenses." (Pasquali edition, preface, vol. XVII.)

[18] Goldoni says 1741, but as Hermann von Löhner points out, he is two years in error. The date Sept. 18th, given in the Memoirs, is also wrong, according to Guido Mazzoni, and should be some time in June or July.

Modena had taken refuge with his Spanish allies. He was presented to His Highness, but the moment "he pronounced the words *ducal bank* and *arrears,*" the Duke coldly terminated the audience. Luckily, there was a company of actors in Rimini, as well as a brigadier in the Spanish service, who was such an ardent lover of the stage, and particularly of Arlecchino's pranks, that he suggested to Goldoni the subject of a farce [19] in which the local actor of that part might display his talents.

There was "a fresh and lively" actress in that company, too, named Angela Bonaldi, who "soon became my companion," Goldoni confesses, "she being the soubrette, and therefore my fate." Spanish austerity reigned at Rimini, however, "there being no gaming, no balls or women of suspicious character"; yet, although this town was "like a convent," he managed to see now and then his "fair friend with the Italian gaiety."

His pleasure was marred, however, by the advent of his brother, bent upon raising another regiment. This time, however, Goldoni warily declined the post of auditor. When the Austrians threatened Rimini (October, 1743), and the Spaniards retreated to Pesaro, Gian Paolo, luckily, went with the latter. Although relieved of his brother's presence, Goldoni was in a state of "greater embarrassment than ever," he being a citizen of Modena, as well as a consul of Genoa, both of which countries were allies of the

[19] *Arlequin empereur dans la lune,* a French farce adapted by Goldoni.

Spaniards. Fearful, therefore, that the Austrians might treat him as a spy, he embarked with his wife for Pesaro, but owing to the roughness of the sea, was obliged to proceed from Cattolica by land, his servant being left behind with orders to follow with the baggage. But the Austrians, on entering Cattolica, sequestered it; thereupon, Goldoni, accompanied by good Nicoletta, set forth from Pesaro in a carriage to reclaim it. When they descended by the wayside to stretch their legs, the driver, alas, made off with the carriage and they were left to proceed to Cattolica on foot. Obliged to carry his wife across a rushing torrent on his back, Goldoni accomplished this feat with "inexpressible joy," while saying to himself: "*Omnia bona mea mecum porto.*"

When the unlucky pair finally reached Cattolica, they were arrested as suspicious characters by an Austrian outpost; but the officer in command proved a friend in need, for he had seen *Belisarius* and *The Man of the World,* and upon learning that Goldoni was the author of these plays, he not only passed him and his good wife through the lines, but ordered his baggage to be returned to him, on the condition that he take any road except that to Pesaro, whence he had come. The next morning, he hired betimes a cart in which he and Nicoletta journeyed to Rimini, where they remained until the Austrians evacuated that town.

During his sojourn at Rimini, Goldoni wrote a cantata, in honour of the wedding of Maria Theresa's

sister, which was sung on the evening of January 7th, 1744, the music being composed by a Neapolitan musician named Francesco (*Ciccio*) Maggiore. Both author and composer were liberally rewarded by the Austrian commander, but Maggiore, who, Goldoni assures us, "was by no means a fool," suggested the hiring of a fine coach in which to make the rounds of the town and its environs for the purpose of presenting copies of the cantata to the field officers of the regiments composing the garrison, a device whereby the collaborators collected "a purse full of Venetian sequins, Spanish pistoles, and Portuguese quadruples, which they divided equally."

At Rimini, Goldoni's days passed blithely. "I had money," he tells us, "nothing to do, and I was happy." The Austrians were not austere, like the Spaniards, so there were "balls, concerts, public games, brilliant assemblies, and ladies of gallantry"; moreover, La Bonaldi, the soubrette who had cheered him during the sombre days of the Spanish occupation, was still in Rimini. Though he "loved his wife," he assures us, and "shared his pleasures with her," good Nicoletta refused to accompany him on his visits to La Bonaldi, "that actress being not to her taste," as may readily be imagined.

The Austrian officers wished opera during the carnival; therefore, the comedians gave place to singers. Though he lost La Bonaldi by this change, Goldoni benefited materially thereby, for the lieutenant-general, who inaugurated this new diversion,

made him its director, and treated him so generously that he "enjoyed more profits than he had any right to expect." This delectable winter came to an end, however, when the Austrians, on evacuating Rimini (March, 1744), left Goldoni behind them in the happy state he thus describes:

> I was free, and the master of my inclinations, and having sufficient money, I executed a plan I had long cherished. I wished to see Tuscany; I wished to wander through it, and live there for some time, for I needed to familiarize myself with the Florentines and Siennese, who are the living texts of pure Italian. I apprised my wife of my plan, and as I pointed out to her that this route brought us nearer to Genoa, she appeared satisfied; therefore, we decided on a trip to Florence.

He had received, meanwhile, a hint from the Genoese government that his resignation as consul would be acceptable, so he tendered it gladly; then set forth from Rimini, with good Nicoletta, to traverse the Apennines on horseback. He was thirty-seven years old; his life thus far had been a comedy as merry and varied as any he penned in later years; yet he was destined to pass four unmomentous years in Tuscany before he became wedded to comedy. He had been groping in tragic darkness, yet before misfortune had exiled him from his beloved Venice, he had written two or three comedies through which the true light of his genius shone. When he returned, four years later, with the troupe of an actor named Medebac, play-writing became a divine call instead of the mere avocation it had been theretofore.

He began, then, the creation of his naturalistic comedy of Italian manners by attacking the *Commedia dell' arte,* an unwritten form of comedy that had reigned merrily in Italy for generations.

An acquaintance with the *Commedia dell' arte* being necessary for a clear understanding of his works, he shall be left for the present, journeying peacefully with his good wife across the Apennines, while that unique dramatic form is considered, as well as the tragedies, comedies, and operas he had written during the years when his life had been a merry comedy, and the vagabondizing instinct strong upon him.

III

THE IMPROVISED COMEDY

DURING the Renaissance Italy awoke to illumine a world long darkened; yet the light shed by her poetry and painting, her sculpture and music, is so dazzling that we are likely to be blinded to the fact that, while these sister arts arose, the drama did little more than rub her drowsy eyes. Indeed, the artists and scholars of the Renaissance failed to realize, to quote Molière, that "the dramatic rule of all rules is to please"; nor did they understand that what pleases one age is likely to weary another. The drama is the most democratic, the most contemporary of the arts; its appeal is made directly to living people—not to one class, but to all; not to those yet to come, but to those present. In brief, the dramatist who would not see his benches empty must tell his audience a story it can understand without the aid of a book of rules.

Forgetting that the times had changed since an entire tragic trilogy and a satire had been the daily program at the Dionysiac spring festivals of Athens, the men of the Renaissance, in love with the austere beauty of classic tragedy, plunged ardently into the work of tragedy writing, mindful only of the lit-

erary merits of the task. Nor did they study the Greek masters at first hand. The rigid closet plays of Seneca, rather than the august drama of Sophocles, became their model. Moreover, the critics of the day—Giraldi, Trissino, Castelvetro, Nores, and Ingegneri—in their ardour to revive the past, evolved rules which, when not of their own making, were at best Aristotle misunderstood or Horace misread.

That a play must have a single action, completed in a single day, and developed in a single place, was the hard and fast dogma they imposed, not only on themselves, but wherever the new learning took root. The result was a drama turgidly exotic, which throve just so long as the pedants sprinkled it with lore within the palaces of the great, but which withered and died the moment it was exposed to the scorching blast of popular opinion.

A reason less apparent than mere pedantry for the failure of the Renaissance to produce a worthy written drama, lies in its own fawning spirit—its tradition of patronage by liberal Ippolitos, sumptuous Leos, magnificent Lorenzos, and the like. Since the theatre, as a permanent place of public amusement with entrance receipts and consequent royalties, did not yet exist, the dramatist who would not starve must take his place among the flatterers, knights, pages, fools, poets, and scholars of the antechamber; and when my lord of Ferrara or of Urbino deigned to pass that way and smile, draw a tragedy from beneath

his well-worn cloak for use on a festal day. When that auspicious moment came, the lucky author's stage was set in the *cortile* of his patron's palace. Raphael, even, might paint the curtains that enclosed it, as he once did for the stage of Ariosto—or, if not he, then Mantegna, who had a liking for the task. The audience was composed of precious ladies with awe for phrasing, pedants with their ears astrain for error; or jealous courtiers, who were watching for the offensive word that might serve to confine the literary upstart favoured by their lord behind the seven series of iron bars guarding the dungeon below that very courtyard where lutes tinkled sweetly and fountains plashed in an atmosphere of perfumed loveliness. No democratic drama could thrive in such a cradle; and as the drama is essentially democratic, that of the Renaissance could not reach maturity in these surroundings.

When banished from the churches, the sacred drama of the middle ages, gradually secularized in Italy, as in western Europe, succumbed in time to the loud merriment of popular farces and the gloomy fustian of didactic tragedy. However, the chronicle play did not arise from its embers as the spark of a national drama. An occasional sporadic attempt was made in this direction, as in the *Orpheus* (*Orfeo*) of Poliziano, a profane play modelled upon the sacred drama, yet with pagan gods instead of the Italian heroes who might have nationalized it. The disunion of the Italian states hindered the formation

of such a drama as arose in England and Spain. There was no single capital where the dramatist might win the favour of a genuine monarch, no dramatic centre where national deeds might be applauded by the patriotic veterans of triumphant wars. Instead of these inspiriting elements there were petty princes, each with a dilettante court, and *condottieri* whose meretricious arms were at the disposal of the highest bidder. There was need for an Alfieri to preach nationalism on the stage, but he did not step forth. In his place stood Torquato Tasso with his *Torrismond* (*Torrismondo*)—a weak Œdipus, a factitious Tristan, whose character is quite as remote from Italian nationalism as the Greece which inspired him is from Norway, the scene of his promising but unfulfilled story.

There were tragedies a-plenty then, as well as pedants to write them: Trissino with his *Sophonisba* (*Sofonisba*), Rucellai with his *Rosamond* (*Rosmunda*), and the like; all imitated from the classics and laboriously constructed according to the rules—all as thoroughly unnational as their names. There were the pastoral dramas, too; false and conventional, with Tasso's *Aminta* as their masterpiece. Only in comedy did the dramatists of the Renaissance sound even the faintest note of nationalism; yet in this field they were again servile imitators. Plautus and Terence were rewritten by them, just as Menander had been rewritten by these able Romans themselves, though almost invariably without the felicity of these

last in adopting foreign characters to home conditions. The written comedy of the Renaissance—the *Commedia erudita* as it is called to distinguish it from the extemporized comedy, or *Commedia dell' arte*—brought forth a handful of writers partially endowed with the comedy sense—Bruno, Aretino, Bibbiena, Ariosto, and Machiavelli—only the last of whom fared beyond the dramatic foot-hills. In *The Mandrake* (*La Mandragola*) of Machiavelli the moral corruption of the age is painted vivaciously, truthfully, and artistically, albeit lewdly; yet, a single obscene comedy, even though it be simple, natural, and truthful, cannot absolve the Renaissance from the charge of having brought forth no written drama, national in spirit or original in character. Two centuries later Goldoni fulfilled that task; until his day, the written comedy of Italy remained in the womb of time.

Upon the word "written" particular stress has been laid, because an unheralded, unrecognized national comedy arose during the Renaissance—a comedy scorned by the scholars vainly imitating the ancients and framing dramatic rules, yet sufficiently vital to leave its imprint not only upon the drama of Italy, but upon that of the rest of Europe as well—the *Commedia dell' arte,* destined to dethrone the ancients, and to inspire through its sprightly technic the modern drama.

Commedia dell' arte all' improvviso, or professional improvised comedy, is the full name of this

dramatic form, the word *arte* being used in the sense of craft or guild, to indicate that this species of comedy was acted by professional players. Occasionally, however, as at the Bavarian court in 1568, amateurs attempted the difficult art of improvisation, though they usually confined their halting talents to the more easily sustained written comedy. However, the word *arte* has by some writers been held to signify "craft," in the sense that the first performances of *commedie dell' arte* were given upon festal days by troupes composed of craftsmen or artisans—performances similar to the trials of Pyramus and Thisbe, as interpreted by Bottom the weaver, Snug the joiner, and Quince the carpenter. Other names for this variety of comedy, each suggestive of its improvisated character, are *Commedia improvvisa, Commedia non scritta,* and *Commedia a soggetto,* while, owing to the leathern masks worn by its buffoons, it has sometimes been called *Commedia a maschera,* or Mask Comedy. In order that the reader may not be called upon to master its Italian terminology, this sort of comedy, so pertinent to Goldoni's work, will be called henceforth the Improvised Comedy, to distinguish it from the Erudite Comedy of the renaissance poets.

"We do not know, nor is it easy to ascertain, the time when this comedy was born," says Dr. Michele Scherillo in the preface to his suggestive brochure on the subject;[1] "its most splendid blossoming, however, was in the second half of the sixteenth century,

[1] *La Commedia dell' arte in Italia.*

in the seventeenth, and in the eighteenth. The man who took upon himself the mission of dethroning it was Carlo Goldoni, who, for the masks, the constant types, the buffooneries, and the intrigues of this thoroughly national and spontaneous comedy, substituted a truer, though less original comedy of middle-class manners. As champions of the cause of Improvised Comedy a critic and an artist of unquestioned prowess arose: Giuseppe Baretti and Carlo Gozzi attacked Goldoni as the defamer of the country's glory, but in spite of the *Frusta* and the *Fiabe,* the Goldonian reform triumphed, and the improvised mask comedy lost ground on all hands, because it was worn out and decrepit."

In order to follow the story of Goldoni's theatrical reform and the critical warfare it aroused, the nature of Improvised Comedy must be understood. Like the drama of the Greeks, its beginnings were of the humblest;—though it did not bloom until the sixteenth century, its seeds were already sown when the renaissance of art and letters began. The maskers, merry-andrews, and buffoons, against whom the voice of the Church had been thundering through the middle ages, the very mimes whose antics had profaned the sacred drama and whom the scholars of the Renaissance looked indulgently down upon, emerged from the terrifying shadow of ecclesiasticism to jingle their bells and beat their bladders defiantly, once the strictures of the clergy were relaxed, some to *montar in banco,* or mount the bench in the market

place as mountebanks, others to *buffare,* or jest, before noble patrons, as buffoons.

At the time the Improvised Comedy attained a form distinct from the mere pranks of clowns, society, humanistically mad since Petrarch's day, had begun to acknowledge its failure to make other than a sham Greece of itself; meanwhile, the common people, flocking to the booths at the fairs, gave hearty laughter to the drolleries there—broad farces outlined by the cleverest fellow in the troupe and acted by himself and mates, with dialogues extemporized for the occasion. The livelihood of these mountebanks was found in the coppers of the multitude; their task was to make the populace laugh. To be so ready of wit that the tongue could not fail when a laugh was demanded, required a degree of dexterity no gawky amateur, "awkward, embarrassed, stiff, without the skill of moving gracefully or standing still," could possibly attain; hence the mountebank became a craftsman skilled in his calling—in a word, a professional actor. He was a playwright, too, since he was the builder of his own plays, but not a play-writer,—because only the outline of his medium, the *scenario,* as it was called, was reduced to written words. In this way a popular drama arose at the vintage festivals and in the market places. When it had grown to vigorous youth, it absorbed the classic plots which the scholars of the Renaissance had failed to popularize, and unfolded them with its own Italian characters. Ariosto's *The Disguised* (*I Suppositi*), for instance, and

The Ghost Story (*Mostellaria*) of Plautus passed to the stage of the Improvised Comedy, while from the *novelle* of the time many a scenario was drawn. Indeed, to quote Dr. Winifred Smith's scholarly monograph on the subject:[2]

> In so confused a situation no one reason for the origin of the *Commedia dell' arte* can be singled out as decisive, though it is perfectly easy to see that its peculiarities sprang from tenacious and by no means unique folk customs and that under academic supervision they were pruned and trained by the skilful hands of the professional actors who later spread them broadcast over Europe.

In this way the popular comedy of the market place became a specific and strongly marked dramatic type—the *Commedia dell' arte,* or Improvised Comedy—a lusty child of Thalia that eventually smothered its puny sister, the Erudite Comedy, to rule supreme in Italy until Goldoni dethroned it with his naturalistic comedies of Venetian life.

Throughout the two hundred and fifty years of its vogue, the dialogue of the Improvised Comedy remained largely unwritten; only a scenario, or as it was originally called, a *soggetto,* being given to the actors,—a *canevas,* or canvas, as it was termed in France (in England a *plat*), on which to embroider spontaneous humour. When a scenario had become popular, however, and the actors had repeated their parts so often that their extemporized lines became fixed in their minds—a true survival, in this case, of the fittest—the dialogue was partially written in.

[2] *The Commedia dell' Arte, A Study in Italian Popular Comedy.*

Among the writers of scenarî, Niccolò Secchi and Niccolò Barbieri are notable as having supplied plots to Molière, while Flaminio Scala's collection of fifty plays in outline,[3] published in 1611, is the most varied and complete collection of scenarî that survives, his extravaganzas being the forerunners of Carlo Gozzi's *fiabe teatrali* both in scenic and fantastic appeal. Indeed, the methods of the Improvised Comedy were by no means confined to the lighter mediums, but were used in the construction of serious and romantic drama as well, known as royal work (*opera reale*), heroic work (*opera eroica*), or mixed work (*opera mista*), in the last of which the serious and lighter elements commingled. The extemporized serious drama was too sentimentally absurd, however, too silly a jumble of history and pathos, to entitle it to much consideration; yet occasionally a scenario of the kind survives, as in the case of *The Guest of Stone* (*Il Convitato di pietra*)—an extemporized interpretation of Tirso de Molina's Spanish play *The Scoffer of Seville* (*El Burlador de Sevilla*). Far more than the Spanish original—or even than Molière's *Don Juan*—has the Italian scenario supplied the story for Mozart's opera of *Don Giovanni,* its *lazzi* or buffooneries being almost identical with those made familiar by Leporello.

The *lazzi* form a thoroughly distinctive feature of the Improvised Comedy. This word, meaning

[3] *Il Teatro delle favole rappresentative, overo la ricreatione comica, boscareccia e tragica,* etc. (*sic.*).

"knots" (*lazzi* being the Lombardian expression for the Tuscan *lacci*), is used to denote the scenes wherein the buffoons interrupt the story with irrelevant pranks—scenes of a kind which Shakespeare frequently wrote for his clowns, in order to relieve the tensity of his plots, and which in England were called "jigs." "We give the name *lazzi,*" says Luigi Riccoboni,[4] "to the sallies or by-play with which the harlequins, or other mask actors, interrupt a scene in progress—it may be by expressions of astonishment or terror, or by humorous extravagances foreign to the matter in hand." A *lazzo* had little or nothing to do with the action of the play and sometimes told a waggish story of its own. The interruptions by the comedians of a modern opéra bouffe with drolleries having no possible bearing on the story are *lazzi;* although, instead of occasionally "gagging" the author's lines for laughs in the manner of the modern funny man, the buffoons of the Improvised Comedy were sent upon the stage with their own spontaneity as the sole peg on which to hang their humour.

Another distinctive element of the Improvised Comedy was the *doti* or dowries, composed of memorized passages used to emphasize vital points of the story. Each actor had his *zibaldone,* too, a medley of phrases subdivided into various classifications, which, if appropriately interpolated, ensured vociferous applause. To be more specific, the *lazzi* were the extemporized jests of the buffoons; the *doti* the

[4] *Histoire de l'ancien théâtre italien.*

memorized lines necessary for elucidating a particular play; the *zibaldone* an actor's stock of speeches used in any play as opportunity arose.

The buffoons, with their sallies of dialect wit, were adept in the art of extemporizing; whereas the actors playing Tuscan characters, the lovers and serious-minded persons of the play, so called because they did not speak in dialect, had such frequent recourse to their *zibaldone,* that it eventually became customary to write down the serious scenes, while leaving the *lazzi* to be extemporized. This latter feature of the Improvised Comedy, therefore, was the last element to survive in improvisation. Originally, however, the task of the playwright was merely to outline the scenes of his play, and indicate the exits and entrances, together with the length of time that might be allotted a love scene or a *lazzo.* The actors were enjoined to learn where the scene was laid, so as not to speak of Rome if Naples were intended, and above all, to be sure of the names of the characters in the play, a father naturally being required to know the name of his son, a lover that of his mistress. This being accomplished, the scenario was posted in the wings where all might consult it. To the actor's wit and the ingenuity of the *corago,* or stage manager, was left the devising of the dialogue and stage business. Such was a scenario—a canvas on which a play was to be embroidered.

Dialogue had dominated the religious plays; action governed the extemporized comedies. They

were quick in movement and replete in stage business, words being subordinated to action, as indeed they should be; a dramatic story, if well constructed, being actable in pantomime. Moreover, upon the dexterity of the actor, as much as upon the cleverness of the playwright, rested the success of an improvised comedy. "To a comedian who depends upon improvisation," says Riccoboni, "face, memory, voice, and sentiment are not enough. If he would distinguish himself, he must possess a lively and fertile imagination, a great facility in expression; he must master the subtleties of the language, too, and have at his disposal a full knowledge of all that is required for the different situations in which his rôle places him." [5]

Although the buffoons of the Improvised Comedy were adroit to a degree that would shame a modern funny man, their sprightly wit was far from cleanly and sometimes trespassed too far upon the little decency left to their dissolute age; for instance, at Milan, in 1583, the performances of a certain Adriano Valerini were interrupted by the governor's orders, and were allowed to be continued only after the scenarî of his plays had been examined by the archbishop of Milan and nothing reprehensible found therein; yet, in spite of this censorship, Valerini and his buffoons might interpolate in their *lazzi* obscenity and even sedition, and if haled before the authorities, show their harmless scenarî as proof of their inno-

[5] Op. cit.

cence. Indeed, the flexibility of the Improvised Comedy made it an efficient patriotic implement during the centuries when Italy was languishing under foreign tyrants, an actor's extemporized words having frequently a sting of bitter hate, which was carefully tempered when officials of a despised alien government were present.[6]

That this patriotism, alas! was contaminated by many vices is evidenced by authors of that day. Niccolò Barbieri, himself an actor, in his apology for the dramatic profession, reluctantly admits that the sins an actor may commit while acting are "to praise vice, speak with unbounded license, make gestures so evil that they excite the spectators to wantonness, deride sacred objects, exhibit holy men and women in the story, act during Lent as if by mistake, pronounce blasphemies, introduce noted cases that may dishonour families, make women appear with their bodies partly naked, etc., etc."[7] "It may be said that the comic stage is little else than a shameful school of unchastity and deceit," adds Alessandro Tassoni, another writer of the period; a charge corroborated by the equally condemnatory words of Tommaso Garzoni, to the effect that "the stage of such a generation of men was a school of impurity, excess, cunning, and rascality."

Of the histrionic vagabondage of the time the last named writer, a jurisconsult of the sixteenth century

[6] During the Roman empire it was the habit of the Atellanæ players to satirize the ruling classes, even the Emperor not being exempt.

[7] *La Supplica,* etc.

with an exceedingly human pen, draws this droll picture:

When comedians enter a town, they at once make it known with their drum that my lords the actors have arrived. Dressed as a man and with sword in hand, the leading lady, mustering the people, bids them welcome at a comedy, a tragedy, or a pastoral to be enacted in the town hall or the Pilgrim's Inn. Adoring novelties, by nature curious, the common herd, shelling out its coppers, hastens to fill the room arranged for the performance. Here is a temporary stage, a scene done in charcoal with scant taste. A preliminary concert of asses and rakes is heard, then the charlatan's prologue, a thundering as rough as Fra Stoppino's voice, gestures as hateful as the plague, interludes deserving to be spitted a thousand times. The *magnifico* is not worth a copper; the zany is a goose; the *graziano* sputters his words; the stupid go-between is tiresome; the lover waves his arms madly with every speech he utters; the Spanish villain offers nothing to the entertainment unless it be *"mi vida"* and *"mi corazon";* the pedant shies at Tuscan words continually; the *burattino's* only gesture is to put on and take off his cap; while the leading lady, stupid above all in her diction, dull in her elocution, drowsy in her gestures, is a perpetual foe of the graces and holds a mortal enmity to beauty.[8]

In this sprightly description of the trials and vagaries of an Italian theatrical troupe of the sixteenth century, several features are to be noted as pertinent. The performance, it will be seen, was given upon a stage erected in a room, not on an open-air stage in the market place, of the sort upon which the Improvised Comedy was originally presented. Scenery was used, too, instead of the back curtains seen in early prints of Italian dramatic performances, as well as in Callot's spirited drawings of the characters which

[8] *La Piazza universale di tutte le professioni del mondo.*

appeared in the Improvised Comedy. Indeed, it is none too generally known that theatres with circular or elliptical auditoriums, rising tiers of seats, aisles and exits, and stages enclosed by painted scenery drawn in perspective, were first built in Italy. The Elizabethan theatre, open to the sky, was but remotely related to the modern playhouse, and like the Spanish theatre retained the characteristics of an inn-yard. The Hôtel de Bourgogne, built in 1548 on the site of the ancient palace of that name, had a flat floor (*parterre*) without seats, and a stage with stationary scenery (*décors simultanés*) similar to the *mansions* used for the religious drama. Richelieu's theatre in the Palais Cardinal, which more nearly approached our modern theatres in equipment and design, was not inaugurated until 1641, over fifty years after the opening of Palladio's famous *Teatro Olimpico* at Vicenza —a theatre essentially like modern playhouses in design, and having a proscenium and elaborate painted scenery[9] enclosing the entire stage. Moreover, nearly a century before the Teatro Olimpico was built, a theatre was erected in Rome during the pontificate of Sixtus IV; and in 1486 Duke Ercole I

[9] Though begun by Palladio in 1579, the Teatro Olimpico was not finished until 1584, four years after his death. Previously, in 1565, according to Pompeo Molmenti (*La Storia di Venezia nella vita privata*), this great architect had built at Venice "in the vestibule of the monastery of Santa Maria della Carità, a wooden amphitheatre for use as a coliseum, with possibly the distribution and forms imitated from the Roman models which he adopted in the designs for the Teatro Olimpico at Vicenza." In 1588 Scamozzi built another pseudo-classical theatre at Sabbioneta. Moreover temporary stages were frequently erected in palaces for special performances.

built "a magnificent theatre" in Ferrara, while in the first decade of the sixteenth century Bramante constructed in the court of the Vatican a theatre modelled after that of the ancients.[10]

The leading lady in her male attire, of whom Garzoni speaks, is another notable feature of the Italian stage. On rare occasions women performed as amateurs in the mystery and miracle plays, but to the stage of the Improvised Comedy the world owes the introduction of professional actresses to replace young men and boys in the female rôles—an innovation Spain, owing probably to its contact with Italy through conquest, is said to have been the first foreign country to adopt. Even in Molière's day old women's parts were still acted in France by men. In England, although Coryat, the traveller, gives hearsay evidence that actresses had appeared in London in his day (1577-1617), French actresses were pelted with rotten eggs and apples as late as 1629, because their sex was considered an offence to theatrical decency. Mrs. Coleman, the first English actress did not appear upon the stage until 1656. The first French actress of whom there is any record, is Marie Fairet, who in 1545, "engaged herself to one L'Espéronnière for a year to play in such manner that it will please all who see her"; yet there is evidence that two women appeared in public with Beolco in Italy as early as 1529, at least to sing songs and madrigals.

[10] Carlo Borghi, op. cit.; and Dr. Karl Mantzius, *A History of Theatrical Art,* Vol. II.

Actresses had become so common in Italy as early as 1562, that a contemporary dubs one of them "a beautiful comédienne who has enamoured many," while the famous Isabella Andreini, born in that year, was able to mount the boards at the age of sixteen without hindrance. Indeed, the stage owes to Italy not only the invention of scenery producing perspective illusion, but the introduction by means of the wandering troupes playing improvised comedies, of professional actors and actresses, and also theatrical make-up—all the ingredients which distinguish the modern from the mediæval drama being found on the stage of the Improvised Comedy.[11]

Many writers, it is true, have found in the religious drama of the Middle Ages the source of the modern drama, an error that must have arisen from ignorance of the Improvised Comedy of Italy. Though the Elizabethan drama and the Spanish classical drama are the heirs of the religious drama, they are not modern in the sense that Molière is modern. In the construction of his plays, the great Frenchman adapted the technic of the Improvised Comedy to his purposes. His characters, too, are with a few notable exceptions the characters of the Improvised Comedy, naturalized as Frenchmen. His plays written to be performed in roofed theatres, on stages lighted artificially and adorned with scenery, may be given today without the excision of a single line, and are in

[11] Dr. Karl Mantzius, Vol. II, op. cit.; Dr. Winifred Smith, op. cit. and *Italian and Elizabethan Comedy;* T. Coryat, *Coryat's Crudities;* A. D'Ancona, *Origini del teatro italiano.*

every essential, except atmosphere, modern plays. Surely this cannot be said of the plays of Shakespeare or any Elizabethan dramatist! Indeed, the construction of the modern drama is derived from the Italian Improvised Comedy far more than from either the classic or Elizabethan drama.

Another vital feature of the Improvised Comedy is the characterization, as exemplified by Pantalone, Arlecchino, Colombina, Pulcinella, Scaramuccia, Fracasso, and their merry mates. Bereft of Italian softness, these names have become household words. Pantaloon, Harlequin, and Columbine still frolic, albeit in pantomime or masquerade; Punch, with his hump and paunch, is both puppet and humorist; Scaramouche has become a word in every tongue; Capitaine Fracasse spells vagabond romance. Yet the lean and slippery dolt and the spangled, tumbling sprite, who have delighted so many generations of English schoolboys, differ almost as greatly from their Italian namesakes as does the Punch of the puppet booth from roguish Pulcinella, true mirror of the Neapolitan proletariat during its foreign bondage. Made mute in France, these characters of the Improvised Comedy of Italy crossed to free England, there to dwell unhampered; yet, being sun-loving southerners, they withered and declined in the cold northern air. They bear now but a faint semblance of their former merry selves.[12]

[12] Some of the Italian buffoons joined the ranks of the French *forains* and acted in the *parades,* when their theatre was temporarily closed in

They are called masks because the actors playing them habitually concealed their features; yet, these leathern face-coverings were but the outward marks by which Arlecchino was distinguished from Pantalone, Brighella, and Pulcinella, their natures being radically, ay, racially, distinct. Throughout centuries of political strife and humanistic rivalry in learning, each Italian city had retained its local characteristics; when the Improvised Comedy was brewed from the lees of lower-class buffoonery and renaissance refinement, many a city added its own spice to the popular decoction. The elements which fermented it, however, an unerring sense of humour, a love of pleasure, freedom, and mirth, were common to the Italic races and among their oldest possessions. Wandering from town to town, their ranks recruited in every province, the actors of the Improvised Comedy learned the distinguishing traits of the inhabitants of each locality, and evolved humorous mask characters to typify certain cities or provinces, each speaking the dialect of his birthplace. The sentimental characters, however, were performed by unmasked actors speaking Italian. In the course of time, the masks became separated into two distinct groups, the one Venetian, or representative of the

1697. After the banishment of the *Comédie Italienne* from the Hôtel de Bourgogne to the Théatre Favart, during the latter part of the eighteenth century, French royal edicts for the protection of the Comédie Française and the Opéra forbade the actors at other theatres to speak or sing their lines, thus compelling both the Italians and the *forains* to resort to pantomime. In this way, Pantaloon and Harlequin became pantomime characters, and as such were introduced into English pantomime.

north, the other Neapolitan, or southern; the northern masks—Pantalone, Brighella, Arlecchino, and Il Dottore—having a firmer hold upon the affections of the public than any of their southern kin, except Pulcinella. They, too, as will be seen, played an important part in Goldoni's work.

Ring up the curtain! Let these masks step forth, each in his traditional garb! First comes the good-hearted Pantalone, the simple, yet shrewd Venetian merchant, in his black mantle and the long, red trousers that bear his name. On his head is a skull-cap, red slippers adorn his toes, and though beards are no longer the mode in Venice, to denote his ancient antecedents, a pointed beard and long mustachios peep from beneath the half-mask that hides his features. "He is a merchant," Goldoni assures us, "because Venice was in ancient times the state having the richest and most extended commerce of any in Italy." His costume is that of a Venetian merchant in Antonio's day; even in Goldoni's time his black robe and woollen skull-cap were still to be seen upon the Rialto. Pantalone de' Bisognosi is his full name; sometimes he is called Babilonio, sometimes, as in the barn-storming company described by Tommaso Garzoni—Il Magnifico. His ectypes are Ubaldo, Pandolfo, Oronte, Géronte, Cassandro, etc., several of whom became the old men of Molière's plays. Pantalone is the first old man of the Improvised Comedy—easy-going, honest, yet canny withal, a bachelor sometimes, more often a widower with an only daugh-

ter on whom he dotes: in his prime he is a sensible bourgeois, indulgent to his neighbours and homely of wit; in his decadence the shuffling, senile fool of the Christmas pantomime. To do him full justice, his name should perhaps be written Piantaleone, or Plant the Lion; for he was once a Venetian *cittadino* of the sterling sort, who, in the days of Venetian glory, planted the lioned banner of Saint Mark wherever the Mediterranean breezes blew.[13]

Venetian Pantalone having made his bow, let Il Dottore, the Bolognese, step before us in academic gown and unstarched linen collar. In his belt is stuck a handkerchief—or perchance a curved knife; on his head is either a turban-like cap or a black felt hat with an enormous brim. A half-mask hides his nose and forehead, his cheek is smudged with red to represent a birth-mark. "His dress," to quote Goldoni, "preserves the costume of the university and bar of Bologna, which is almost the same to-day, and the singular mask which covers his forehead and nose was inspired by a birth-mark that defaced the features of an early jurisconsult." Il Dottore is the second old man. His name is generally Graziano, sometimes it is Baloardo Graziano, Prudentio, Hip-

[13] Pantalone is said by Boerio, the compiler of a Venetian dialect glossary, to be derived from Piantaleone; others give San Pantaleone as the patron saint of all pantaloons. Yet, "he was quite certainly not christened after this saint," says Dr. Winifred Smith, "nor does he seem to have been named because he represents a Magnifico who planted the lion of Venice in the Levant." However, as this painstaking writer upholds no other origin of the name, not even "pantos-elemon," a modern derivation from the Greek, there seems to be no valid reason why Boerio's definition should not be accepted.

pocrasso, or Balanzon Lombardo. Usually a lawyer, occasionally a physician, astrologer, grammarian, or philosopher, he makes a vast parade of learning, yet never speaks without uttering some pompous absurdity—law jargon, macaronic Latin, irrational syllogisms, or any preposterous pedantry an actor could invent, all uttered in a broad Bolognese dialect. Molière's doctors are characters suggestive of Il Dottore of the Improvised Comedy; while Rossini's opera, *The Barber of Seville* (*Il Barbiere di Siviglia*), founded on Beaumarchais's comedy, preserves both the first and the second old man of the Improvised Comedy for modern audiences, Bartolo being Pantalone unmasked and Don Basilio, Il Dottore without his birth-marked cheek.

Pantalone and Il Dottore, in characteristics the *senes* of Latin comedy, were but half masks, taking part in the story of the play as well as in the *lazzi;* the full masks, appearing solely in the *lazzi,* being Arlecchino and Brighella, the two *Zanni,*[14] so called, both hailing from the country-side of Bergamo and both servants; the one gluttonous, credulous, lighthearted, the other a clever, pimping rogue.[15]

Let these rascals appear! Spryly Arlecchino makes

[14] The *Zanni* are in character so similar to the low comedy parts of Latin comedy, that this term has been held to be a corruption of *Sanniones.* A more likely origin of the word, however, is to consider *Zanni* a Bergamask corruption of *Giovanni,* which becomes our English *Zany,* a silly-John, the diminutive *Zannarello* being the French *Sganarelle.*

[15] Truffaldino, Trivellino, Bagattino, Burattino, Mezzettino, and their kind were but the stupid sons of Arlecchino; the rogue Brighella fathering a score of scamps as well, Pedrolino (Pierrot), Beltramo, Frontino,

his entrance, for his nimbleness will turn him in the course of time into a mute ballet dancer. Naïvely he talks to the audience from beneath his black half-mask, a silly, ingenuous fellow, ever being tricked by Brighella, his roguish colleague, which makes the comedians themselves dub him the second zany, Brighella being the first. Sprightly Arlecchino wears the tight-fitting suit of a country servant, the rags and patches of which have been conventionalized into variegated triangles of red, green, and yellow. Whiskers bristle beneath his mask, under his arm is a wooden sword, a small bag dangles from his belt, on his head is a soft cap decked with the hare's scut which Goldoni assures us was, even in his day, the distinguishing adornment of a Bergamask. Agile, compliant, credulous, yet gay, the personality of this valet changes with that of each actor playing him; and the same may be said of Brighella, Pantalone, Il Dottore, and the other masks; for, just as various actors interpret Hamlet differently, so the buffoons of the Improvised Comedy, while retaining fundamental characteristics, made different dolts or rascals of their rôles; some imitative of actors who had gone before, playing their parts traditionally, others becoming creative artists.

But Arlecchino stands alone upon the stage. His knavish mate Brighella awaits his cue. No vari-

Gradellino, and Bagolino being his children, or he the offspring of one of them, this picaresque ancestry being somewhat difficult to trace. In Figaro's veins Brighella's blood flows, too, other notable offspring being Mascarille, Sganarelle, and Scapin.

coloured patches mar the latter's sleekness. He is the servant of some rich young rake and wears livery consisting of a loose white shirt, trimmed with green lace, and wide white trousers. A brown half-mask hides his features, a dagger is in his belt, on his head is a white cap, or bonnet plumed with red feathers, which, in the course of time, becomes conical, just as his tanned mask gives place to the white flour that characterizes his brother Pedrolino's (Pierrot's) face, a degenerate Brighella being our modern clown. Like Arlecchino, his stupid farce-mate, Brighella is a Bergamask, his tawny mask being intended, as Goldoni tells us, "to indicate the complexion of the inhabitants of those high mountains, burned by the heat of the sun." Roguish, cowardly, yet nimble-witted, Brighella is ever ready to aid his libertine young master—or any one else who will tip him—in any devilry; in a word, he is the rascally valet who in Spain was called the *gracioso;* yet who is best known to us through our acquaintance with his offspring, the Mascarille and Scapin of Molière.

"The four masks of Italian comedy," Goldoni calls these four characters. To have said the "four masks of Venetian comedy" would have been more exact, since at Naples, in the neighbourhood of ancient Atella, the birthplace of buffoonery, other mask characters sprang forth, quite as Italian as those of the north. To Goldoni, who first saw these southern masks at Rome when he was past fifty, Venice spelled Italy; yet in Pulcinella the Neapolitan, quite as much

as in Arlecchino or Pantalone, live the characteristics of a people, Francesco Cerlone—a poor artisan of Naples—being the poet who made him the protagonist of his race. Without discussing whether or not Pulcinella be descended from Maccus, the fool of Atellan farce, or from Pulcinella dalle Carceri, a grotesque patriot of the thirteenth century, it may be said that his modern début was made in the sixteenth century in the white shirt and breeches of a countryman of Acerra, his black mask, long nose, hump, paunch, dagger, and truncheon being later additions. Time, alas! has given him a foolish wife and made him a mere puppet, though little more than a century ago, in Cerlone's clever hand, he mirrored a people and an age.

Other masks of the south are Coviello, the Calabrian, a singing vagabond, once played by Salvator Rosa; the swaggering Spanish Capitano, by name Fracasso or Matamoras, a bully and poltroon, like the Miles Gloriosus of Plautus; Tartaglia, the stammerer; and Scaramuccia, a black, cowardly boaster, best known to us through the superb art of Tiberio Fiorelli, the great Scaramouche, who was Molière's reputed master in the art of grimace. The southern colleagues of Pulcinella are almost countless, while Rome and the hill towns, too, had their citizens in burlesque on the stage. In truth, these masks are bewildering in their multiplicity. Kaleidoscopic Burattino came from everywhere and nowhere, and was both harlequin and clown; Spavento, Coccodrillo,

Escarabombardon, Rinoceronte, and Spezzaferro were swaggering Spanish bullies of the type of Matamoras and Fracasso; Trivellino, Fritellino, and Formica (the creation of Salvator Rosa) fiddled or sang like Coviello, while Pasquariello danced; Truffaldino was a rascally Arlecchino; Bertrame and Meneghino were both Milanese; Stenterello was a Tuscan; Sendron a Modenese,—and so many laughing, tumbling creatures with long noses and slit mouths there were who jested and jibed throughout the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries, that a volume would scarcely suffice for the recital of their names and antics.

Colombina, the *servetta,* or soubrette, with whom both northern Arlecchino and southern Pulcinella had their love-affairs, played a captivating part in the Improvised Comedy as well as in Goldoni's plays. She, too, had many names—Rosetta, Marinetta, Corallina, Diamantina, Smeraldina, Carmosina, etc. Far more alert than the fairy-like Columbine who pirouettes in the Christmas pantomime, she is ever a saucy, adroit young person—the type after which Molière modelled his pert serving-maids, and Beaumarchais his Suzanne. Colombina's rival is the older Pasquella, generally a widow, of more experience and less virtue, with whom she quarrels and makes peace in turn.

Of the lovers' rôles in the Improvised Comedy little need be said. They spoke Tuscan and improvised little or not at all; together with most of their love

affairs, they were borrowed from the Erudite Comedy, their names being pseudo-classical: Flaminia, Giacinta, Ortensia, Beatrice, and Rosaura for the women; Leandro, Lelio, Orazio, Ottavio, and Florindo for the men. Most of them spooned in Goldoni's comedies, many in Molière's as well. But the characters with whom the student of Goldoni is most concerned are the four northern masks—Pantalone, Il Dottore, Arlecchino, and Brighella—each of whom became enrolled in his earlier comedies, and helped to mould his naturalistic style.

Although the characteristics of the masks are distinctly drawn, their origin is as obscure as the time when the buffoons began to hide their features from the public is uncertain. To Angelo Beolco, an actor and playwright of the early sixteenth century, whom Vernon Lee—inspired by Maurice Sand—acclaims "the first man who gave the *Commedia dell' arte* a separate and honourable position," as well as the first "to mourn the misery of Italy," [16] has been given the doubtful honour of introducing masks, he having been said to have devised their use as a means to hide the identity of himself and his well-born comrades as they wandered from hamlet to hamlet, playing his comedies through disinterested love for Thalia. Yet as early as 1518, when Beolco was in his teens, a writer named Pontano [17] describes an al fresco entertainment by masked actors. Certainly, during

[16] *Studies in the Eighteenth Century in Italy.*
[17] Quoted by Dr. Winifred Smith, op. cit.

PANTALONE AND FELLOW MASKS IN AN IMPROVISED COMEDY

Museo Correr

Beolco's lifetime the Improvised Comedy flourished in all its essentials, a fact made manifest by a spirited song of Zannis and Magnificos, which was composed before 1559, when it appeared in print.[18] Here, as will be seen by the following translation of three of its stanzas, not only Pantalone, the staid Venetian, is mentioned, but the Bergamask, the zanies, and women,—a proof that when this song was written, the masks had been developed and actresses were upon the stage of the Improvised Comedy, which was no longer set up in a *stanza* or hall.

As up and down the land we stroll,
We play the staid *Venetian's* rôle,
The *Bergamask,* the *Zanies'* part:
For acting farces is our art!
We 're great reciters, all of us,
Both excellent and glorious.

The other worthy player-bards
Stay at the *hall* to act as guards,—
The lovers, *women,* hermits, knights.
We 've outlined plays that are delights,
So witty, jolly, pretty, bright,
You 'll die of laughing on the night!

And then we wish to show to you
A lovely scene, well-made and new
Where Cantinella's merry voice
With all the Zanies will rejoice

[18] *Canto di Zanni e Magnifichi,* by Anton Francesco Grazzini, called Il Lasca, in *De' tutti Trionfi, carri, mascherite o canti carnascialeschi del tempo di Lorenzo de' Medici a questo anno 1559.*

To give you pleasure; if awhile
You would unduly laugh and smile,
To-morrow come ye, one and all,
To see the show and fill the hall!

Rome had its Erudite Comedy—*fabula palliata* and *fabula togata*—the one foreign, the other native; and also its improvised comedy—the Mimes from Greece, the Atellanæ of the soil. Certain characters, too, of Roman comedy, both written and extemporized, resemble vaguely the masks of the Renaissance; hence, it is easy to be carried away, like Riccoboni, Maurice Sand, and Vernon Lee, with the feeling that Improvised Comedy has "existed in rudiment ever since the earliest days of Latin, Oscan, and Italo-Greek civilization." Dr. Winifred Smith, however, comes to the conclusion that "even admitting the unproved hypothesis, that the Atellanæ were farces marked by improvisation and masked personages, it would be impossible to establish between them and the Italian extempore plays a connection worthy the name." Giulio Caprin,[19] a modern Italian authority, also scouts the idea that the masks of the Renaissance are directly descended from the buffoons of Roman comedy, a view with which Symonds accords,[20] when he states that "nothing could be more uncritical than to assume that the Italian masks of the sixteenth century A. D. boasted of an uninterrupted descent from the Roman

[19] *Carlo Goldoni: la sua vita—le sue opere.*
[20] Introduction to *The Memoirs of Count Carlo Gozzi.*

masks of the fifth century B. C.," his assumption being that

> Out of the same persistent habits emerged the same kind of native drama; and just as the Atellanæ of ancient Rome eventually brought the comedy of the proletariat upon the public stage in cities, so at the close of the sixteenth century the *Commedia dell' arte* worked up the rudiments of popular farce into a new form which delighted Europe for two hundred years.

This being the modern critical view regarding the suggested Roman origin of the Improvised Comedy, it seems unnecessary to present here the fancied resemblances of Maccus to Pulcinella, Bucco to Arlecchino, Pappus to Pantalone, and Dossennus to Il Dottore, or to sketch the supposed likeness between the nimble and dull-witted *sanniones* of Rome and the *zanni* of the sixteenth century. Nor is there space within the limits of this chapter to discuss the hypothesis that the masks of the Improvised Comedy are descended either from the comic personages of the mystery plays, or from a mediæval profane comedy that may have existed side by side with the sacred representations.

Although the origin of the Improvised Comedy is shrouded in uncertainty, there is no doubt that it "delighted Europe for two hundred years." The glory of the Renaissance might be on the wane, yet Italy still taught art and fashion to the rest of Europe when this form of comedy reached its full development. Young foreigners, seeking culture in Italian

courts, took to their native lands such stories of the ability of the Italian mask actors, that many a northern monarch sent to Italy for a troupe of buffoons to edify him. In Austria, Bavaria, and France, Italian masks appeared and gave delight with their spontaneous merriment, carrying by storm the ramparts of the native drama. In Spain and England the local forces, though hard pressed, held their own, the drama of those lands being too thoroughly national to be stunted in its growth by this foreign blast.

Troupes of Italians, it is true, played at the court of Spain, and made scenarî from Spanish plays, the stage receiving technical impulses from these adepts in dramatic construction; yet the Spaniard of that day was too dire and gloomy to be strongly influenced by Italian merriment; therefore, the cloak-and-sword drama, true vehicle of national expression that it became, ran little risk of being influenced by the sprightly *Commedia dell' arte.*

In England, Italian actors played probably as early as 1572, certainly in 1577, when Drusiano Martinelli was granted a license to appear in London. Thomas Heywood (1612) speaks of "doctors, zawnyes, pantaloons, and harlakenes." Shakespeare, too, denotes the sixth age of man by "the lean and slipper'd pantaloon." Captain Fracasso is manifestly the inspiration of Udall's *Ralph Roister Doister,* and Ben Jonson's *Captain Bobadil,* and in the four-scene plats, or scenarî, discovered about a century ago among the papers of Henslowe, the manager, and his son-in-law,

the wealthy actor Alleyn, there is evidence that the professional methods of the Italian mask actors were known to the English stage even before Shakespeare penned his first play; therefore, it is not surprising to find the action of his pieces interrupted by the *lazzi* of clowns, doltish as Arlecchino or knavish as Brighella. It is unlikely, however, as Dr. Winifred Smith points out,[21] that the English actor ever learned to improvise from a scenario. Many plots, certain structural features, and also its means of expression—prose for comedy and blank verse for tragedy—the Elizabethan drama undoubtedly owed to the Italian stage; yet, that was not the entire debt, for it owed as well, to quote Dr. J. W. Cunliffe,[22] "in tragedy restraint and dignity; in comedy graceful and sprightly satire of contemporary life."

In France the debt was far greater. As early as 1548, Italian actors began to invade that land, and when in 1571 the *Gelosi* [23] made their first pilgrimage beyond the Alps, the French saw extemporized comedy interpreted by adepts. Henceforth, except during the nineteen years when the Hôtel de Bourgogne was closed by Louis XIV (1697-1716), the

[21] *Italian and Elizabethan Comedy.*

[22] *The Influence of Italian on Early Elizabethan Drama.*

[23] A famous troupe of Italian mask actors, which made several trips to France between 1571 and 1604. The personnel changed from time to time, Flaminio Scala being reputed to have been its director for several years. Among its most noted histrions were wanton Vittoria Piissimi, its first leading lady, Simone Bolognese and Panzanini Gabriele, the *zanni,* Francesco Andreini, both *innamorato* and *Capitano,* and Isabella Andreini, the latter's wife, noted for her talent, beauty, erudition and exemplary conduct.

Italian masked buffoons reigned merrily in France, until they were deprived of their theatre during Goldoni's old age (1779), and forced to become mute pantomimists in order that the rights of the Comédie Française and the Opéra might be protected. Two hundred years had elapsed since the advent of the *Gelosi,* and during that time the Improvised Comedy of Italy had taken so strong a hold upon French popular taste that not a single French writer of comedy had been wholly free from its influence. Molière made liberal use of Italian material, mask buffoonery being his inspiration. By adding his own masterful characterization and atmosphere to plots taken from all lands, he created French comedy, but to Italy he was indebted for his comic characters, for the love intrigues of his witching coquettes and pert soubrettes, and above all for his spirited stage-craft.

Yet, much as the modern drama owes to the Improvised Comedy, that unique form of stage merriment had several serious defects. Instead of the old plots used to-day with new characters to carry them, Italian audiences were once regaled with the same characters fitted to stories so manifold that Carlo Gozzi, Goldoni's bitter rival, estimated the number of dramatic situations used in improvised comedy at between three and four hundred. The characters were not only fixed, but personal as well, an actor once playing Arlecchino, Pantalone, or Pulcinella remaining in the same part throughout his life, and often giving such an individualized touch to it, that he be-

came known solely by its name, as in the case of Tiberio Fiorelli, the great Scaramouche. Aside from the facility with which an actor might vulgarize an improvised comedy, the vital defect of this dramatic form lay in the use of masks, and in its tendency to become stereotyped. The masks prevented facial play, and too often the buffoons' *lazzi* were but repetitions of jokes already stale, while the love-making of the *primo amoroso* was wont to be drawn entirely from his *zibaldone*. So long as the mask actors remained idealists, their scenic parody of life was unequalled in spontaneity; yet during their decadence the Scylla and Charybdis, between which they seldom sailed unscathed, were lewdness and monotony.

Goldoni realized these evils thoroughly. In speaking of the stage in his day and of the improvement that had come to literature since the preceding century, he laments the fact that "the last to yield to a better system were the actors." "Being suckled with bad milk," he continues, "they were incapable on their own volition of mending their ways"; and to his mind there was nothing on the stage but "indecent harlequinades, foul and scandalous intrigues, lewd jests, immodest loves." [24] In *The Comic Theatre* (*Il Teatro comico*), a play he wrote to uphold his dramatic methods against the attacks of his enemies, he makes a character say: "The public is tired of always seeing the same things, of always hearing the same words—the moment Arlecchino opens his

[24] Prefaces to the Pasquali edition of Goldoni's comedies.

mouth, you know what he is going to say." Indeed he was alive not only to the vulgarity and monotony of the Improvised Comedy, but also to the factitiousness created by the use of masks, an inartistic convention he thus decries:

> The mask must always be very prejudicial to the action of the performer, either in joy or sorrow; whether he be in love, cross, or good-humoured, the same features are always exhibited; and however he may gesticulate and vary the tone, he can never convey by the countenance, which is the interpreter of the heart, the different passions with which he is inwardly agitated.

Though the evils of the Improvised Comedy are many, its virtues are world-wide in their influence. To Molière, the first distinctly modern dramatist, it taught dramatic technic. To Goldoni it furnished the stage-craft that makes his comedies move so easily and naturally. From its elements the Frenchman created the modern drama, and from them too, the Italian built a new and thoroughly national written comedy with characters drawn from the life of his people—the proletariat, as well as the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. Thus Goldoni's inspiration, like Molière's, was the unwritten, democratic comedy of Italy, spontaneous in dialogue and flexible in construction, a comedy shaped by the practical experience of professional actors, unhampered by didactic rules, and therefore so vital that it still influences the drama, the task of the playwright of the present day being to construct his scenario after the manner of the Improvised Comedy, then revivify in dialogue Pan-

talone, Il Dottore, Arlecchino, Brighella, *il primo amoroso, la signora,* and *la servetta.* This done, their rôles are allotted to the first old man, the second old man, the first low comedian, the second low comedian, the leading man, the leading lady, and the soubrette. Il Capitano or Scaramuccia is played by the modern villain, Pasquella by the first old woman, Ottavio or Silvio by the juvenile, and the simpering rôle of Flaminia, Bettina, Clarice, or Isabella by the modern ingénue. Thus closely is the drama of the present day related in construction to the Improvised Comedy of Italy, an inexhaustible grab bag from which our playwrights consciously or unconsciously draw their material, just as those of the Renaissance drew from Plautus and Terence, and they from Menander the Greek.

IV

THE PERIOD OF ESSAY

GOLDONI'S naturalistic comedy was created from the lewd dust of the Improvised Comedy of his day; yet so slowly did he pursue his task that his earlier efforts are simply comedies of this nature, shorn of lubricity, in which the love scenes only were penned, the improvisation of the *lazzi* being left to the ingenuity of the buffoons. *Don Juan Tenorio;* or, *The Debauchee,* his first lengthy comedy is, it is true, a five-act effort in verse, written in imitation of Molière. This play, however, is so foreign to Goldoni's genius that, like his tragedies, it becomes interesting mainly as an evidence of how far afield an artist may wander. Yet Goldoni was ever straying from the path of his genius, his work fairly covering the entire range of the drama, —tragedy, tragi-comedy, comedy, farce, extravaganza, opera, and opéra bouffe.

He is eminent only in comedy. Here he has hewn a path quite his own; for although he has been termed erroneously "the Italian Molière" his genius is distinct from that of the Frenchman. His ambition was both to reform the Italian stage and "not to spoil nature"; yet, his reform was brought about so gradually

and he spoiled nature so frequently by straying away from the sunlit streets of Venice, that to follow the development of his art with chronological exactness becomes futile. Not only did he write many kinds of plays but many kinds of comedies as well. In dramatic naturalism lies his fame; for only when he paints the life of his native Venice is he eminent. Speaking roughly, a hundred and fifty comedies, a hundred tragedies, operatic tragedies, and opéras bouffes form his dramatic product; yet to know the comedies is to know Goldoni, his other work being interesting chiefly as a matter of endeavour.

"To classify the vast mass of Carlo Goldoni's theatrical works is most difficult," says Ernesto Masi; "writers and editors have tried it many times, yet there is not a single one of these attempts that does not open the door to criticism both justifiable and justified."[1] He wrote comedies in Tuscan and comedies wholly or partly in the Venetian dialect, comedies in prose and comedies in verse; some dealt with the life of Venice, others were exotic in subject; some were comedies of character, others of intrigue; some were serious, others light; some dealt with fashionable life, others with the bourgeoisie or the proletariat. At no time in his long career did he confine his work to any particular style, his choice of subject being determined either by his mood or by theatrical exigencies. To group his work into comedies of character or of intrigue in the manner

[1] *Scelta di Commedie di Carlo Goldoni.*

of many writers does scant justice to Goldoni, the painter of nature. He either depicts effectively the Venetian life he knows, or ineffectively a life he does not know—the London of Richardson, the Paris of Voltaire and Diderot, the Persia of the Arabian Nights.

As in the case of Molière, prose was the natural medium of his art; verse a form of expression forced upon him by the demands of public taste. About forty of his comedies are in verse; five of these, and the best by far, being in the Venetian dialect. Although scarcely a tenth of the prose comedies are penned in the speech of Venice, those on which his fame most surely rests are written in this idiom; while in nearly twoscore of the remainder the mask characters speak in dialect after the manner of the Improvised Comedy. Indeed in almost every instance, the speech of Venice is used either wholly or in part whenever the scene of the play lies on native soil.

There are, moreover, three distinct periods in Goldoni's dramatic work, coëtaneous with equally distinct periods of his life. During his earlier years his vagrant spirit led him into many channels and through many adventures. From 1721, when he ran away from school at Rimini and travelled to his home at Chioggia with a band of strolling players, until the autumn of 1748, when he appeared in Venice as the playwright of a troupe managed by an actor named Medebac, he led a fitful life as stu-

dent, diplomatist, and lawyer, a life at once adventurous and unsuccessful. From 1734 until 1743 he wrote plays for Imer's troupe; yet during a part of this time he was Genoese consul at Venice; so it cannot be said that he had adopted play-writing as his profession. It was his avocation rather than his vocation; furthermore he abandoned the stage in 1744 to practice law at Pisa. During this first period of his life he wrote some thirty dramatic pieces:—tragedies, tragi-comedies, operas, operatic interludes, opéras bouffes, written comedies, and improvised comedies. It was a period of essay during which he was groping in dramatic darkness, uncertain whither to direct his steps and still dubious of dramatic writing as a profession.

Burning his legal bridges entirely in 1747, by signing a contract with Medebac for a period of one year, he appeared in Venice during the following year as a professional dramatist and, to quote his own words, "abandoned himself without reflection to the comic genius that had lured him." Here begins the second period of his life as well as of his work. During fourteen years he wrote professionally for the stage of Venice; his life, except for quarrels with managers, actresses and critics, being joyously lived in the tranquillity of domestic peace. During that happy time he penned fully a hundred comedies, and about half as many opéras bouffes. Graced by all his masterpieces save one,[2] this was the most prolific

[2] *Le Bourru bienfaisant,* written in French in 1771.

period of his life as well as the period of his greatest achievement.

When the indifference of the public and the attacks of rivals and critics drove him into exile in Paris in 1762, he began again in France, as the playwright of *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne,* the reform of comedy he had accomplished in Italy; yet he fought less valiantly for his ideals. Though he penned some fifty comedies, scenarî, and opéras bouffes in France, once only did his genius shine with its full splendour, and then in a foreign tongue.

These three distinct periods of Goldoni's work have been kept in mind during the writing of this book, the present chapter treating of the first, or period of essay, the chapter entitled "Dramatic Work in France," of the last, or period of exile; while the chapters called "Comedies of the Aristocracy," "Comedies of the Bourgeoisie," "Comedies in the Venetian Dialect," "Exotic Comedies" and "Comedies in Verse," are all concerned with the great prolific period between his return to Venice in 1748 and his departure for Paris in 1762. To these rules of selection an exception has been made in regard to those comedies in which the plots are taken wholly or in part from Molière, a chapter being devoted to the plays in which Goldoni attempted to imitate the work of his great predecessor.

At the time when he began to write for the stage of his day the Improvised Comedy was in its decadence. True, there were a few skilled mask actors

such as Antonio Sacchi, the harlequin, and Cesare D'Arbes, the pantaloon, but they were the exceptions rather than the rule, the Improvised Comedy being then mostly in the hands of lewd jack-puddings. In its prime this stage parody of life, unexcelled in spontaneity and truth to nature, was allied to the fine arts; in its decline it became the base medium of anathematized buffoons forbidden by law to enter decent houses. Even in sybaritic Venice, a state inquisitor of Goldoni's time lashed the players of Venice in these scathing words: "Remember that you actors are persons odious to our blessed Lord, but tolerated by the prince only as a pasture for those who delight in your iniquities."[3] To this arraignment of the Improvised Comedy of his day, Goldoni adds the following testimony:

> Indeed, the Comic Stage in our Italy had been so corrupt for more than a century that for the transalpine nations it had become an abominable object of contempt. There upon the public boards only unseemly harlequinades, foul and scandalous gallantries and jests were in vogue. Stories poor in conception and worse in execution, uncivil and ill ordered, which far from correcting vice as the first, the ancient and most noble object of comedy, only fomented it, and arousing the laughter of the ignorant plebeians, dissolute youths and the most debauched of the population, disgusted, then irritated the educated and the well-bred, who if they sometimes frequented so poor a theatre and were there dragged out of boredom, took good care not to take with them their innocent families, lest their hearts might be corrupted. . . . Of late, however, many have tried to regulate the theatre and bring good taste back to

[3] Nicolò Maria Tiepolo (about 1778), as quoted by P. G. Molmenti in his *Carlo Goldoni, Studio critico-biografico.*

it. Some have attempted to do so by producing upon the stage comedies translated from the Spanish and from the French, but mere translations could not make a hit in Italy. National tastes differ, as do customs and languages, and for this reason our mercenary actors, feeling in their prejudice the force of this truth, set about altering them, and reciting them in improvisation; yet they so disfigured them that they could no longer be recognized as works of such celebrated poets as Lope de Vega and Molière who beyond the mountains, where better taste flourished, had happily composed them. They have treated with the same cruelty the comedies of Plautus and Terence; nor did they spare any of the other ancient or modern comedies that happened to fall into their hands, or which had been born, or were being born, in Italy itself, especially in that most polished school of Florence. In the meantime the educated chafed, the people wearied; all exclaimed in accord against bad comedies; yet most people had no idea of good ones.[4]

Such was the lewd comedy which inspired Goldoni's naturalistic comedy of Venetian life, his earlier farces like those of Molière, who learned his technic in the same school, being little more than scenarî, in which either all or some of the four Venetian masks appear. His earlier comedies, too, are frequently interrupted by *lazzi,* though they are free from vulgarity. Gradually as his pen became surer in touch, his masks emerged from their buffoonish chrysalids as fully developed characters; his Pantalone, though still clothed in his red trousers, and often masked, typifying Venice's worth, his Brighella and Arlecchino, her light-hearted, indolent people, his Dottore, her corrupt bureaucracy and bar.

Goldoni has been accused of never escaping from

[4] Prefaces to Bettinelli and Paperini editions reprinted in Pasquali edition, Vol. I.

the influence of the Improvised Comedy; yet when he discards the masks and their *lazzi* entirely and presents the life of his beloved Venice just as it appears to his artistic eyes, his work is as free from the stereotyped devices of the Improvised Comedy as is Molière's,—as free as Ibsen's, it might almost be said, for here Goldoni appears as a consummate naturalist depicting actual life in truthful colours. Yet only a few times in his long dramatic career did he liberate himself wholly from the hackneyed tricks of the native comedy, or the stilted artifice of the French comedy of his day. The method of his reform was slowly to eliminate the masks by accustoming the public to written comedy constructed in the old style with some or all of the stereotyped characters, then to discard this style and these characters entirely, and present to his countrymen a written comedy along conventional French lines. Yet so little did he appreciate his true genius that his memoirs teem with defence of these artificial comedies, while his naturalistic masterpieces often receive scant mention. Nevertheless he seems to have understood that his ability to reproduce the life about him was the source of his immediate success; for while he scolded his countrymen for their inability to appreciate refined comedy, he catered to their taste. He had moreover a definite purpose in view which he expressed in these words:

> Now there was within me this selfsame spirit, which making me a most attentive observer of the comedies that were being

performed in the various theatres of Italy, caused me to recognize and lament their corrupted taste, while comprehending at the same time that the public would derive no little benefit, and he who should succeed, no small praise, if some man of talent inspired by the comic spirit should attempt to uplift the abased Italian Theatre. This hope of glory finally enlisted me in the undertaking.[5]

His memoirs, written years after this declaration was penned, show the fidelity with which he upheld the banner of his reform. "I am now," he said of a play produced shortly after he had won his first success in Venice, "perfectly at my ease, and I can give rein to my imagination. Hitherto I have laboured on old subjects, but now I must create and invent for myself. This," he added, "is perhaps the happy moment to set on foot the reform I have so long meditated. Was I wrong," he continues, "in encouraging myself in this manner? No; for comedy was my inclination and good comedy should be my aim. Had I entertained the ambition of equalling the masters of the art, I should have been wrong, but I merely aspired to reform the abuses of the stage of my own country, and to accomplish this required no great amount of erudition." Comedy being concerned with ordinary life is therefore likely to be truer to life than tragedy. "The misfortunes of the heroes of tragedy interest us at a distance," Goldoni tells us, "but those of our contemporaries are likely to affect us more closely. Comedy, which is an imitation of nature, ought not to reject virtuous and pathetic sentiments, if the essen-

[5] Preface to the Pasquali edition, Vol. I.

tial object be observed of enlivening it with those comic and prominent traits which constitute the very foundation of its existence." Here he has tersely expressed the fundamental principles of his art. "The rule of all rules," as Molière wisely says, "is to please," a precept Goldoni expounds when maintaining that "a comedy without interest, plot, or suspense, in spite of its beauties of detail, cannot be other than a bad play. Yet I could not," he said at another time, "reform the national comedy all at once without shocking its admirers: therefore I awaited a favourable moment for commencing a frontal attack upon it with more strength and safety."

The moment for that attack came in 1747 when he "abandoned himself without reflection to the comic genius that had lured him." Thereafter, until driven into exile by the neglect of his fellow countrymen, he fought valiantly in defence of an art, the theory of which he thus elucidates in *The Comic Theatre,* a polemic rather than a play, written as a prologue to his dramatic work in Venice:

> Comedy was invented to correct foibles and ridicule disagreeable habits; when the comedy of the ancients was written in this wise, the whole world liked it, for on seeing a facsimile of a character upon the boards, everybody saw the original either in himself or in some one else. When comedy became merely ridiculous, nobody paid further attention to it, since under the pretext of causing laughter, the most high-sounding absurdities were permitted. Now that we are again fishing comedies out of the *Mare magnum* of nature, men find themselves again searching their hearts and identifying themselves with the passion or the character which is

being represented, for they know how to discern whether a passion is well depicted, whether a character is well sustained: in short, they observe. . . .

The French have triumphed in the art of comedy during a whole century; it is now time for Italy to proclaim that in her the seed of good authorship is not dried up, Italian authors having been, after the Greeks and the Romans, the first to enrich and adorn the stage. The French in their comedies, it must be admitted, present fine and well-sustained characters; moreover, they delineate passions well, and their conceptions are acute, witty, and brilliant, but the public of that country is satisfied with a little. One single character is sufficient to maintain a French comedy. Around a single passion well conceived and drawn, a great number of speeches vibrate which by dint of elocution present the air of novelty. We Italians demand much more. We wish the principal character to be strong, original, and well recognized . . . that the plot shall be fertile in incidents and novelties. We demand morals mingled with quips and humour. We insist that the end be unexpected, but plainly derived from the trend of the action. We like to have an infinity of things, too many to relate here, and it is only in the course of time that we can succeed in learning by practice and usage to know them and to obtain success with them.

Although he was opposed to "flattering the actors who were so fond of their old ways," Goldoni, nevertheless, recognized that the Improvised Comedy permitted them "to distinguish themselves by the promptness of their wits, from players of all other nations," [6] and he was too alive to the exigencies of the stage to attempt the sudden undoing of that comedy. Indeed he was a commercial dramatist in the modern sense, writing to fill a theatre, yet never entirely forsaking his ideals. Still, he often failed to realize that his most popular plays were likewise his

[6] Preface to Pasquali edition, Vol. III.

best. Knowing the worth of real comedy, but enticed by the literary glitter of contemporary France toward false comedy as a thing to be emulated for its refinement, he returned to real comedy only when spurred on by the man in the box-office. "But it was time to leave this kind of sentimental play," he exclaims after an unsuccessful attempt to naturalize artificial French comedy, "and return to characters and real comedy, the more so as we were nearing the end of the carnival, when it was necessary to enliven the entertainment and put it within reach of everyone." Whenever he was obliged to do this, he presented one of his naturalistic pictures of Venetian life; as is often the case, while doing his best work he usually wrote at fever heat. "How many comedies have I precipitated in six or seven days!" he exclaims. "How often have I, when harassed by time, given the first act for rehearsal and without seeing it again, written the second, and likewise the third!" This he was able to do through his thorough mastery of stage-craft, which he elucidates as follows:

> Time, experience, and habit had so familiarized me with the art of comedy, that after inventing the subjects and selecting the characters, for me all the rest was mere routine. Formerly I went through four processes before finishing the composition and correction of a play.
>
> First process: the plan, with the division into three principal parts, the exposition, the intrigue, and dénouement.
>
> Second process: the division of the action into acts and scenes.
>
> Third: the dialogue of the more interesting scenes.
>
> Fourth: the general dialogue of the entire play.

It frequently happened that during this last process I changed all that I had done in my second and third; for ideas succeed one another; one scene produces another, one chance expression furnishes a new thought. After a while I was able to reduce the four processes to a single one. Having the plan and three divisions in my head, I would begin at once with Act One, Scene One, and would go straight on to the end, with the maxim always in view, that all the lines ought to terminate in the dénouement, which is the principal thing, it seems, and for which all the machinery is arranged.

Although he had written a comedy when a child and had at the age of twelve played a female rôle in a performance given at Perugia, his dramatic education really began at Rimini in 1720, where, instead of studying logic under the Dominican father Candini, he read Plautus, Terence, Aristophanes, and the fragments of Menander. After fleeing from Candini's scholastic boredom, he received his first practical knowledge of the stage while journeying by boat to Chioggia in company with Florindo and his strolling players. The inspiration given him by a study of the classic dramatists was crystallized into a distinct ambition in Pavia, when at the age of fifteen, he made the discovery in the library of Professor Lauzio that although there was an English, Spanish, and French drama, there was no Italian drama. Seeing with pain that "the nation which was acquainted with dramatic art before every other nation, lacked something essential," he resolved, that day, "to do his share"; yet, he was no deep student of the classics, the books which he "reflected upon most" and which he "never regretted having used"

being "The World and The Stage." [7] Surely experience is a better training for a dramatist than erudition.

Throughout his long life the fire of the ambition lighted at Pavia was never quenched, while that youthful resolution to do his share was fully sustained, no other Italian having done so much toward raising his country to the dramatic level of other nations. Though he found no collection of plays in Professor Lauzio's library "which could do honour to Italy," at Chioggia during the following summer he was, as has been seen in a preceding chapter, inadvertently given by a worthy canon, Machiavelli's *Mandrake,* a comedy which he "devoured at the first reading and perused at least ten times thereafter"; though it was not "the wanton style" nor "the scandalous intrigue of the piece" which made him admire it, but rather the fact that it was the first comedy of character which had ever fallen into his hands. Cicognini [8] is another Italian author of comedy whom he read and re-read, "a Florentine author very little known," as he says, "in the republic of letters," yet exceedingly interesting withal "because of the art with which he created suspense and pleasingly untied his knots."

Thus inspired, Goldoni set himself assiduously to the task of reforming the Italian stage, his object be-

[7] Prefaces to the editions of 1750 and 1753, reprinted in Pasquali edition.

[8] There were two dramatists named Cicognini, who were father and son: Iacopo (1577-1633) and Giacinto Andrea (1606-1660); but, as Guido Mazzoni points out, it is manifestly the younger to whom Goldoni refers, he being a writer of many comedies.

ing to ennoble the Improvised Comedy by purifying its morality and by creating from its elements a national written comedy. After he began to write for the stage he groped in dramatic darkness for fully twelve years before becoming convinced that comedy was his bent. His studies of Menander, Plautus, Terence, Machiavelli, and Cicognini should have turned his steps thither; yet like Molière at the outset of his career he was a votary of Melpomene. At the age of twenty-five he bowed, as has been seen, to the influence of Metastasio by writing *Amalasontha,* a tragedy for music, which was condemned by the director of the opera at Milan, and burnt by Goldoni without a pang of regret. Though an acquaintance to whom he had read it before it was committed to the flames told him "to be constant to comedy," he did not accept this advice unreservedly until years of experience had taught him its value. In the meantime his youthful pen brought forth tragedies, tragi-comedies, and interludes, the first of his efforts to be performed professionally being *The Venetian Gondolier* (*Il Gondoliere veneziano*), the musical interlude penned at Milan during the summer of 1733 for the troupe of The Anonymous, and which, although written to be sung, Goldoni calls "the first of his comedy efforts to appear in public and afterward in print."

This interlude is a charming little sketch of a lovers' quarrel written in quaint dialect stanzas, the two characters that sustain it being thoroughly natural

persons: moreover they are Venetian and of the people, while their love is a human passion with none of the artificial delicacy common to the French comedy of that day. The language, too, though in verse, is the language of the streets; therefore in this trifle, Goldoni sounded clearly though faintly the first note of his dramatic naturalism.

In 1734, his tragi-comedy *Belisarius,* presenting as its hero the Emperor Justinian's famous general, was produced so successfully in Venice that it ran for nearly a month. This play, written in the midst of war's alarums, and saved from the thieving deserters who despoiled its author during the campaign, in 1734, is as good as any of Goldoni's tragedies and tragi-comedies, yet the reader of the present day who wades through its pomposity will merely yawn, wondering how a genius so true could have penned a work so false. No imagery adorns its tiresome lines; no philosophy, no truth. Goldoni says that its characters were men and not demigods: they are certainly very dull men speaking dull versified prose, and the wonder is that the play was applauded. It was written in the traditional stilted manner of the neo-classics, though perhaps its success was due to its novelty, it being the first play, according to Professor Ortolani,[10] without masks or without music produced in Italy since Maffei's *Merope* (1714), a tragedy also written to elevate the stage, Maffei being, like Goldoni, a reformer. Maffei's efforts were

[10] *Della Vita e dell' arte di Carlo Goldoni.*

futile, however, and so were Goldoni's so long as he persisted in writing pompous tragedies and tragi-comedies, the titles of the plays of this character he penned during this period of essay being sufficient to indicate their turgid qualities.[11] Speaking of *Belisarius* Goldoni says that "it was not worth the price at which it had been valued," and the same may be said of his other lugubrious plays written when he was seeking fame without knowing where her proud temple stood.

To find a young dramatist inspired by neo-classicism at a time when Metastasio was in vogue is not surprising. The Racine of Italy, as Goldoni calls this lyric dramatist, knew Horace by heart; yet he is said never to have begun writing without first reading a few pages of Guarini's *Pastor Fido;* so, although he occasionally attained to the Roman's exquisite elegance, his style was more often tainted with the tasteless elegance of the later Renaissance. Apostolo Zeno, whom Goldoni likens to Corneille, although the first to dignify melodrama—or grand opera, as we now call this dramatic form, the word melodrama having been perverted from the original meaning—has been styled a lesser Metastasio. With equal justice Goldoni, the youthful imitator of both these writers, may be called a lesser Zeno as far as concerns his melodramas.

To rewrite Griselda, a musical tragi-comedy Zeno had himself written in collaboration with Pietro

[11] *Rosmonda, Rinaldo di Montalbano, Enrico di Sicilia,* and *Griselda.*

Pariati, was his first operatic effort. This was followed by four melodramas [12] written in the style Zeno and Metastasio had popularized. As in the case of the tragedies, to detail their turgid stories here would merely weary the reader, they, too, being interesting mainly as evidence of how far Goldoni strayed during his earlier years of dramatic writing from the road the Muses intended him to follow. Years after when he had travelled a considerable distance upon that road, he edited a subscription edition of his plays.[13] Realizing how futile had been his youthful attempts to write serious plays, he did not include therein a single classical tragedy, or tragicomedy.

Another style of musical play, to the penning of which he frequently devoted himself throughout his long life, he called "merry plays for music" (*drammi giocosi per musica*), these being a versified form of musical comedy akin in both to opéra bouffe and to French vaudeville. Of these merry plays he wrote some fifty or more,[14] all mirthful trifles in which his genius for comedy is manifest; *The Young Countess* (*La Contessina*), for instance, a youthful

[12] *La Generosità politica, Gustavo primo re di Svezia, Oronte re de' Sciti,* and *Statira.*

[13] Pasquali edition, 1761.

[14] Dr. Cesare Musatti (*I Drammi musicali di Carlo Goldoni*) has collected the titles of eighty-six musical plays by Goldoni, including the more serious operas, as well as the musical interludes, such as *Il Gondoliere Veneziano.* Of the merry plays he gives the titles of more than fifty. Over sixty different musicians, among them Galuppi, Paisiello, Cimarosa, Jomelli, Bach, Haydn, and Mozart, composed music for Goldoni's libretti.

effort of this nature, displaying in its dainty love-story of a bourgeois lad who pretends to be a marquis in order to win a noble lady's hand, more truth to nature than is to be found in any of his sombre tragedies. Yet to linger over his "merry plays for music" is to wander from the comedy he glorified. Though more replete with art than his tragedies and tragi-comedies, they are, like his interludes—to use a commercial phrase—only "by-products" of his genius, and therefore merely beg the question of his art.

Before he turned his lagging steps towards comedy, Zeno told him that his opera, *Gustavus I, King of Sweden* (*Gustavo primo re di Svezia*) was "mediocre, though a hundred times better than those merely imitated from the work of others [meaning himself]." When it was produced "the actors were good," Goldoni tells us, "the music excellent, and the ballets very lively, but nothing was said of the play. I was behind the curtain," he adds, "sharing the applause that did not belong to me, and in order to pacify myself, I said that this is not my style, meanwhile resolving to have my revenge with my next comedy." Thus was he guided by popular acclaim toward the road he should have been following.

His first sustained comedy is *Don Juan Tenorio; or, The Debauchee* (1736), an imitated play and therefore, like his efforts in tragedy, opera, and versified comedy, merely a step in the dark. His career as a painter of the foibles of mankind really began two years later (1738) with *The Man of the*

World (*L'Uomo di mondo*);[15] a play that in the slang of our day would be called "The Man About Town," or better still "The Good Fellow"; Momolo, its principal character, being, to quote his author, "generous without profusion, gay without rashness; fond of pleasure without ruining himself, and prepared to bear a part in everything for the good of society." His family name is Bisognosi; therefore he is a son of Pantalone spending for his pleasure the money his hard-fisted father has amassed—in a word, a typical rich man's son.

Although "a good fellow," Momolo is no degenerate like the Venetians who in 1797 paled at the sound of Bonaparte's drums. He loves pleasure and spends his father's hard-earned sequins freely, yet he is a true descendant of his sturdy ancestors. Scorning to wear a sword, he disarms a fop who threatens him with one, and when he meets a pair of bravos who have been paid to beat him, instead of fleeing, he boldly accosts them, and by his genial manners induces them to beat instead the very coward who has bribed them. Momolo is indeed a true son of Venice in her prime, and though the first of Goldoni's sustained characters drawn from the life of his native city, deserving of a high place among them.

Possibly Mr. Bernard Shaw found in this comedy the original of his *Man and Superman,* there being

[15] This comedy was called originally *Momolo Cortesan,* Momolo, being a diminutive of Girolamo or Jerome, but when Goldoni gave it to the press he changed the name to *L'Uomo di mondo;* the subtitle being *El Cortesan venezian.*

in it a lady named Eleonora, who pursues Momolo throughout the three acts so diligently that, although he declares he has no intention of relinquishing the blessings of bachelorhood, he is finally entrapped in matrimony by the unblushing assiduity of her declarations of love, a result not accomplished, however, until after he has discovered the little laundress, who is the pastime of his idle moments, supping with the poor but ardent admirer on whom she has bestowed her real affections.

Smeraldina, this sophisticated laundress, is incited to pluck good-natured Momolo by her brother Arlecchino,[16] as shiftless a rogue as ever graced comedy. A street porter too lazy to work even when the chance offers, Arlecchino gambles away the profits of his sister's charms, and when Momolo agrees to pay for her instruction at the ballet school he sends him the bills for the fine clothes that will enable him to swagger about the coffee-houses and gambling-dens of Venice as the brother of a ballet dancer; while in order that no one shall mistake his new quality, he washes his hands for the first time in a year. Ludro, too, a *chevalier d'industrie,* who preys upon the strangers in Venice, is another rogue quite as cosmopolitan in his rascality, his type being met in every large city.

A picture of actual life, true in characterization, natural in dialogue, and containing all the germs of

[16] Called Truffaldino when the play was printed, because Sacchi, who played the part, was known as Truffaldino.

its author's greatness, *The Man of the World* was written because Goldoni's inclinations were at last fixed on comedy, with "good comedy" as his "proper aim." "It was not reduced to dialogue at first," he tells us, "the only part written out" being that of "the principal actor," hence in its first form it was essentially an improvised comedy in which three of the masks, Arlecchino, Brighella, and Il Dottore took part. There are no *lazzi,* however, distinct from the plot; moreover, it was a Venetian play in which the Venetian characters speak the dialect of the city of lagoons.

In his next comedy, *The Prodigal* (*Il Prodigo*), which is similar in treatment, Goldoni pictures life on the banks of the Brenta, the Newport of Venice, where "opulence explodes itself and mediocrity is ruined," a young Venetian again named Momolo being the hero. Yet he is not the same Momolo who figures in the preceding comedy, and although the scene is the charmed spot where the spendthrift descendants of the sturdy merchants who had glorified Venice built rococo villas and factitious gardens adorned with voluptuous statuary, our dramatist fails to depict the luxurious country life of the idle rich of Venice so well as in the later comedies he was to place upon the Brenta's shaded banks. His second Momolo, moreover, is no such worthy fellow as his namesake the man of the world, but rather a witless spender of an inheritance, tricked by his steward, and

twisted around the thumb of the widow he loves, when she comes to his villa attended by her brother and an adoring cousin of her late husband.

These two plays in which a Momolo appears are both comedies of Venetian life, showing unmistakably, albeit dimly, the first sign of Goldoni's genius. After their production, the mask actors of Imer's troupe became so importunate in demanding old-fashioned comedies, in which their talents might shine, that he was forced to write for them two scenarî styled respectively, *Harlequin's Thirty-Two Misfortunes* (*Le Trentadue disgrazie d'Arlecchino*) and *A Hundred and Four Mishaps in a Single Night* or, *the Critical Night* (*Cento e quattro accidenti in una notte o la notte critica*). These scenarî have not been printed, but the first had, Goldoni tells us, "all the success possible for an improvised piece," the admirers of the mask comedy finding in his thirty-two misfortunes "more discretion and common sense than in former improvised comedies"; while the hundred and four mishaps of the second scenario followed one another in a way so complicated that this play "might have been called the actors' test," so much did its success depend upon the ability of its interpreters.

In order to imagine what the complicated action of these lost scenarî was like, it is necessary to examine *The Servant of Two Masters* (*Il Servitore di due padroni*), the one among Goldoni's extant plays most thoroughly in the spirit of the Improvised Comedy. In this piece, written five years later than the lost

scenarî, Arlecchino [17] appears in his true guise of a blunderhead who complicates the plot by his stupidities. Pantalone, too, is the dotard of the Improvised Comedy rather than the wise Venetian merchant Goldoni presented so frequently at a later day; while Il Dottore is merely the blustering spouter of macaronic Latin made familiar by generations of mask actors. The lovers, Florindo and Beatrice, love and sigh in the old-fashioned way; the complicated plot, too, with its deft intrigue and rapid movement, is the counterpart of an improvised comedy plot tied together by Arlecchino's droll *lazzi*.

This play, so lacking in the qualities that distinguish its author, demonstrates more clearly, perhaps, than any of his earlier pieces the noble advance he made in his art when he forswore the hackneyed methods of Improvised Comedy. It shows, besides, in its rapid change of scene, his early disregard of the conventional unity of place, a sane freedom of construction he maintained whenever it suited his purpose, and which he thus ably defends in *The Comic Theatre,* his views being remarkably in accordance with the modern theory of the drama:

> Aristotle began to write concerning comedy, but he did not finish, and we have from him but a few imperfect fragments regarding it. In his *Poetics* he prescribed the unity of place for tragedy; yet he did not mention comedy then. There are those who maintain that his statements about tragedy must be interpreted as referring to comedy also, and that if he had finished his treatise

[17] Again called Truffaldino because the part was played by Sacchi, known by that sobriquet.

on comedy, he would have prescribed the unity of place. But my answer is, that if Aristotle were now alive, he would cancel this obnoxious precept, because a thousand absurdities, a thousand blunders and improprieties are caused by it. I distinguish two kinds of comedy: pure comedies and comedies of intrigue. Pure comedy can be written with the unity of place. Comedy of intrigue cannot be thus written without crudity and incongruity. The ancients had not, like ourselves, a way to shift scenery, and for that reason they observed the unities. We have always observed the unity of place when the action occurs in the same city, and all the more when it remains in the same house. . . . Therefore, I conclude that if comedy with the unity of place can be written without hair-splitting or unseemliness, it should be done; but if on account of the unity of place absurdities have to be introduced, it is better to change the scenes and observe the rules of probability.

Five years before he wrote *The Servant of Two Masters,* the play that has led to this digression, Goldoni took a decided step forward in his art with *The Bankruptcy* (*La Bancarotta*), the comedy that followed the two scenarî of mishaps he had written to placate the mask actors of Imer's troupe. Here he stood on firm ground, for although *The Bankruptcy* presents the four Venetian masks, and, like *The Man of the World,* was only partly written at the time of its presentation, it is nevertheless a comedy of character, inspired by the excellent moral purpose of exposing financial trickery. Moreover, there is a certain Balzacian realism in this play, Pantalone its principal character being like César Birotteau,[18] the victim of his own unthriftiness and extravagance. Yet far from passing sleepless nights of repentance, this Ve-

[18] *Grandeur et décadence de César Birotteau.*

netian bankrupt bears his financial burdens so lightly that no sooner is he freed from the menaces of his creditors by the efforts of Dr. Lombardi, his friend and legal adviser, than he gives a lavish party for Clarice, an opera singer, and loses his last sequin at cards to the bogus nobleman she cherishes. He is a wicked old rake whose financial embarrassment is caused by his own vices quite as much as by an utter lack of business acumen. Selling his merchandise to shady customers on credit, he is also robbed by his clerk Truffaldino, while the cash that finds its way across his counter is squandered upon Clarice and other queans without the slightest remorse for the wrong he thus does his worthy son, his flighty second wife being almost as undeserving of pity as himself. When Pantalone is enmeshed in the toils of the law a second time, Dr. Lombardi forces him to place his affairs in the hands of his son. Bidding farewell to his family with scarcely a tinge of remorse, he goes forth to rustication with no regret for the good times he has had, but glad, rather, of their memory to cheer his unregenerate old heart. Here vice, though punished, is unrepentant, a strange conclusion to a comedy by one who, "seeking nature everywhere," found it "beautiful only when it furnished him with virtuous models."

The Bankruptcy is crude in construction and often slovenly in dialogue; yet it is one of Goldoni's truest comedies, peccable old men such as Pantalone being plucked wherever the ballet flourishes. Moreover the

fact that its sermon is not preached didactically makes its effect enduring, Pantalone being a ruthlessly drawn picture of a wreck upon the sands of life, whose weak, old, vice-ridden features haunt the reader long after portraits less cruelly true have been forgotten. Like *The Man of the World,* this comedy of financial shortcomings contains the germs of Goldoni's greatness. Though less polished, it is truer to life than *The Clever Woman* (*La Donna di garbo*), its successor, a comedy wherein a girl of the people is placed upon a pedestal so high that we must needs crane our necks to see her likeness to humanity.

Though her father is a mere footman and her mother a laundress, Bettina the heroine of this play is the peer of any doctor of Padua in learning. Moreover, a girl as astute as she proves herself would not be likely to be seduced by a flighty young student, even though he promised to marry her. Her knowledge of law and the humanities was acquired at Pavia, Goldoni tells us, by listening to the learned talk of the students when she delivered her mother's laundry work at their doors,—surely a charge upon our credulity. She is a clever minx, however, learned in the ways of the world as well as in book lore, for when she is deserted by Florindo, her student lover, she comes to Bologna and takes service as a lady's maid in the household of his father, a prominent lawyer of that town. There she schemes so successfully to win the regard, not only of her master but of his entire household that when Florindo comes

home from Pavia, accompanied by a nobleman's daughter disguised as a fellow-student, he finds Bettina firmly entrenched in the hearts of his family, his father having even gone so far as to ask her hand to cheer his lonely old age.

In a debate held in order that Florindo may demonstrate the worth of his university training, Bettina bombards him with such a fusillade of Latin phrases that rather than betray his ignorance he admits that a man of honour must keep a promise of marriage no matter how it is made. Thinking Bettina's shaft is directed at his own breast, the father publicly proclaims his intention of marrying her himself; whereupon, the son, to prevent such a misalliance, acknowledges that Bettina has been the dalliance of his student days. Forced to confess that he had promised to marry her, he is forced also by the general regard in which she is held to comply with the words of his public admission that a man of honour should keep such a promise. But Florindo has also promised to marry Isabella, the girl who has eloped with him in male attire. Luckily there is a young snob at hand not averse to marrying a nobleman's daughter howsoever tarnished, especially when it is pointed out to him that she is an heiress; so Florindo gives his hand, albeit reluctantly, to Bettina, the adroit girl who has outwitted him, the comedy ending in her triumph.

Although *The Clever Woman* is distinctly inferior in characterization and atmosphere to both *The Bankruptcy* and *The Man of the World,* it is their

superior in dramatic construction and literary expression. Furthermore, it is the first of Goldoni's original character comedies [19] in which the dialogue was entirely written; therefore "it marks a notable step in his development as a dramatist." From the elements of the Improvised Comedy he had finally produced a comedy of contemporary manners, in which the comedians, though appearing in their masks and conventional garb, spoke written dialogue, their *lazzi* being, moreover, an element of the plot instead of irrelevant horse-play. This is the form of most of his Venetian comedies in Tuscan prose, only those in dialect lacking all of the familiar masks, who in his deft hands became truthful characters of Venetian life. Their importance, however, he gradually curtailed, and in his exotic comedies and his comedies in verse he dispensed with them entirely.

Being the first of his character comedies built from the elements of the Improvised Comedy, in which the dialogue was entirely written, as well as the last comedy he wrote for Imer's troupe, *The Clever Woman* marks the close of the first period of Goldoni's dramatic career. During this period of essay he had learned by experimenting with tragedy, tragi-comedy, opera, opéra bouffe, versified comedy, musical interludes, and improvised comedy, that only when he wrote pure comedy were "all the applause, all the hand-claps, all the bravos, for him alone." It was a lesson well learnt. In his efforts to Italianize

[19] *Don Giovanni Tenorio* was merely an adaptation.

the refined French comedy of his day, he wrote, thereafter, many a false and stilted play, yet seldom did he court Melpomene again, Thalia being henceforth chief mistress of his ambition.

After writing *The Clever Woman,* he left Venice without seeing it produced, and finally settled at Pisa, where although a practising lawyer, he did not entirely abandon his connection with the stage, since he wrote while there several comedies for music, and two improvised comedies. The *Servant of Two Masters,* one of the latter, has already been described; the other was called *Harlequin's Son Lost and Found* (*Il Figlio d' Arlecchino perduto e ritrovato*). Though its Parisian success many years later caused him to be invited by *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne,* to visit Paris, Goldoni condemns its lack of verisimilitude, it being in his opinion "little better than the work of a schoolboy." [20]

Returning to Venice during the summer of 1748 as a professional playwright, he began the remarkable period of his career that ended with his departure for Paris in the spring of 1762. During these fourteen years he wrote his best comedies and won enduring fame. The play with which he made his new bow to his fellow citizens [21] was a failure, while the two that succeeded it were but partial successes.[22] Not

[20] According to Giulio Caprin (op. cit.) Desboulmiers's *Histoire anecdotique et raisonnée du théâtre italien jusqu'à* 1769, contains a résumé of this scenario.

[21] *Tonin bella grazia, o il Frappatore.*

[22] *L'Uomo prudente* and *I Due gemelli veneziani.*

until carnival time of that first season (1748-1749) did he cast aside the antiquated methods of the past, and present to his delighted fellow-townsmen the two plays that first distinguish him as the creator of a national comedy. In *The Artful Widow* (*La Vedova scaltra*), one of these epoch-marking comedies, he paints in Tuscan prose a spirited picture of the cosmopolitan society of Venice; in the other, called *The Respectable Girl* (*La Putta onorata*), written in the soft dialect of Venice, he stands forth as the dramatic tribune of her people. Henceforth, whenever he was not enticed away from his native genius by French refinement, he was Venice's *Gran Goldoni,*—true painter of her sons and daughters, true spokesman of her sentiments and passions.

To attain this fame he was obliged to tread a stony path. Wearied by the antiquated and obscene *lazzi* of the Improvised Comedy, the intelligent public of Venice had become wedded to the melodrama of Zeno and Metastasio; therefore Goldoni was obliged to create a following for the new comedy. Moreover, his actors were only wretched outcasts beyond the social pale, whose voices, when their efforts failed to please, were drowned by the hisses and catcalls of ribald audiences. No Richelieu or Louis XIV sustained him; yet this patient Venetian plunged courageously into the Herculean task of cleansing the filthy comedy of his day. Making his theatre a wholesome resort for his fellow-townsmen, he mirrored them truly there in the hope that his humorous

expositions of their vices and foibles might turn them from their degeneracy back to the glory of their ancestors. Since the brilliance of the *Rinascimento* had waned, artistic truth had lain buried in artificiality and filth. When this pioneer of the *Risorgimento* reached Venice in the autumn of 1748, he had already unearthed the corpse his naturalism was soon to bring to resurrection.

V

FROM ARCADIA TO THALIA'S SHRINE

WHEN the story of his wandering was arrested, Goldoni was journeying, it will be recalled, on horseback toward Tuscany with the intention of familiarizing himself with the Florentines and Siennese, whom he styled "the living texts of pure Italian." His native speech being a dialect, an acquaintance with the literary language of Italy was necessary for the fulfilment of his ambition to create a written Italian comedy; his pilgrimage to Tuscany, therefore, was not so aimless as the many roamings his vagabondizing instinct had heretofore inspired. The years he subsequently passed on the banks of the Arno made him familiar with the euphuism of literary Italy, as well as with its language; for until he reached Tuscany he had not breathed the scent-laden air of those rococo drawing-rooms in which the *femmes savantes* of eighteenth century Italy paid languishing court to its Trissotins and Vadiuses.

Although the Italian literary coteries of his day were even more vapid and affected than the French societies of *alcôvistes* and *précieuses* which Molière had satirized so scathingly during the previous cen-

tury, Goldoni does not appear to have realized that the Arcadian Academy of Rome and its many colonies were merely the lazarets of the epidemic, aptly described by Dr. William Roscoe Thayer as "a Phœban influenza whose victims sneezed in rhythm." [1] On the contrary, in his memoirs he shows the Arcadian Academy considerable deference, and when in one of his comedies [2] he directs his satire against its pretentions, the reproof he administers is but a gentle fillip compared to the cruel lashing Molière bestowed upon the euphuists of France.

As the reader may never have sauntered into that remote haunt of verbiage and poetastry, the Arcadian Academy, "Papa Goldoni"—as the Venetians still tenderly style him—shall for the moment be left journeying across the Apennines with good Nicoletta on a nag beside him, while we turn aside to enter the Parrhasian Grove of the Arcadians for a glimpse of their departed splendour.

The period of their literary history following the grand manner (*forma splendida*) of the cinquecento the Italians call the period of exaggeration (*periodo dell' esagerazione*). Chronologically it corresponds to those brilliant years in France when the classical ideal inaugurated by Malherbe was nationalized by Corneille and his great contemporaries; yet in Italy not one notable man of letters appeared to grace it. In the realm of science Galileo Galilei was a genius, and Guido Reni was far from contemptible in paint-

[1] *The Dawn of Italian Independence.* [2] *Il Poeta fanatico.*

ing; yet languid Marini, who gave preciosity to France, was the most widely known poet of Italy during the seventeenth century, while Adriani and Martelli were the principal dramatists. The period of exaggeration, therefore, might as fittingly be styled the period of literary death. Indeed, literature became so turgid that its feeble heart could no longer give it blood: hence, like a man with dropsy, it perished of its own distension and lay dead until Metastasio, Goldoni, Alfieri, and Parini breathed between its cold lips the life that brought it to resurrection. Meanwhile, the Arcadian Academy had risen to power, held sway, and in its turn was dying a lingering death.

This strange institution was founded in Rome during the last decade of the seventeenth century—a time when Spanish tyranny and papal domination had left Italy a prey to brutality and fanaticism. In the words of Giuseppe Finzi, a modern Italian commentator: [3]

> All the highest ideals that are wont to furnish and maintain the right of citizenship were then extinguished; oppressed and bled to the point of exhaustion, the people were stagnating, and the well-to-do and educated class was selfishly and recklessly endeavouring to enjoy the present as best it might, hiding beneath a hypocritical display of formality and manner and an artificial, superstitious piety, the corruption that was consuming it, mothlike, from within. Filled with vanity and conceit, the nobles embellished themselves in splendour and arrogance, vied with each other in extravagance, pomp, and gallantry, pastured themselves on flattery and base homage, and thus upheld, like their Spanish conquerors,

[3] *Lezioni di storia della letteratura italiana.*

their preëminence over the other social classes. Both idle and lazy, they avoided applying thought and labour to anything serious, useful, or truly noble.

It was a time when poets earned their daily bread by writing laudatory odes, no patrician wedding being held, no well-born nun taking the veil, no noble's child being christened, no cardinal chosen from the aristocracy without reams of verse being penned in honour of the event; and when there were no auspicious occasions to laud, there were books of vapid rhymes to be dedicated in hyperbole to patronizing noblemen or vainglorious prelates.

When this seventeenth century, so lumpish in Italy, so alert in France, was drawing to a close, a group of vain pedants who had been enjoying in Rome the hospitality of ex-Queen Christina of Sweden were forced by the death of their freakish patroness to seek a new asylum. For lack of a patrician abode in which to forgather, they met, fourteen in number, one balmy spring morning of the year 1690 in the meadows behind the castle of Sant' Angelo, known as the Prati di Castello. While these apostles of fustian were improvising verses in the shade of sighing elms and vociferously applauding one another, one of them became so enthusiastic over the pastoral nature of the scene that he exclaimed, "It seems to me that to-day we have revived Arcadia." This sentiment caused his comrades to vow that they would keep Arcadia alive; whereupon the Arcadian Academy (*L'Accademia dell' Arcadia*) was instituted, the first step in its

development being the adoption of a name by each member suitable to his state as an Arcadian shepherd; the next, the election of a *Custode Generale,* or shepherd of the flock. For this honour Alfesibeo Cario was chosen, that being the Arcadian name of the Abate Crescimbeni, vainest, dullest, yet most persistent of the Academicians. The opposing candidate was Gravina, known in Arcadia as Opico Erimanteo. This jurist and critic, who was destined to befriend Metastasio, then unborn, became so chagrined by his defeat that he sulked in his tent, thence to lead an unsuccessful revolt against the rule of Crescimbeni, a crabbed priest with "a brain half wood and half lead" and a crooked nose, which inspired the nickname of *Nasica.* Meanwhile, because of its exclusiveness, all literary and social Rome clamoured for admission to the new academy.

Arcadia was established as a republic of letters, each sheep being as good as its neighbour. Within its gates parrot-beaked Crescimbeni piped metaphorically on the syrinx, the Academy's symbol, whilst the cardinals, priests, jurists, nobles, and plebeian literati who composed his flock gambolled in black broadcloth smocks and full-bottomed wigs with crook-bearing shepherdesses who in real life were portly duchesses, mayhap. When the untoward exercise made them lose breath, they fell upon their knees to spout languishing verses on the havoc Cupid had wrought. Meanwhile a *chef de cuisine* would prepare bucolic goodies to be served in a rustic bower.

Arcadia was serious in purpose, however, its object being "to exterminate bad taste." It had, besides, a weighty code of laws penned by Gravina before his revolt, and, in the person of Crescimbeni, its Custode Generale, an indefatigable chronicler who wrote not only its history voluminously, but also its rules for the composition of every imaginable poetic form, from the *maggiolate* and the *motti* to the *contradisperate* and the *cobole;* yet, earnest though its intentions were, its members, while "pursuing bad taste even into fortresses and villas least known and least suspected," failed to realize that its real abiding place was Arcadia itself. The official home of the Academy was known as the Mew (*Serbatoio*), "a very little thing," as a contemporary remarks, "filled with very little things, in which the only large thing was Crescimbeni's nose." After its members had inaugurated Olympic games in his honour, John V, the profligate King of Portugal, presented them in 1726 with a triangular strip of land on the Janiculum, which, on being laid out in flower beds and terraces, and styled the Parrhasian Grove (*Bosco Parrasio*), became Arcadia's summer residence.

Meanwhile the men of the seventeenth century were dying and those of the eighteenth were taking their places. There was less Spanish stagnation or papal nepotism in Italy then, and more French levity and tolerance, but Arcadia still flattered princes, whilst its pedants gloried in disputes, and its poets, such as Frugoni, whose gorgeous nonsense gave the word

frugonería to the Italian language, dissipated their talents in high-flown trash.

But the talent most misapplied of all, at least to the northern mind, was that of the Cavalier Bernardino Perfetti, greatest of the *improvvisatori* and a man who displayed his undoubted ability in a spectacular way. It is precisely because he could extemporize any given amount of verse on any given subject that his performances were theatrical rather than poetic. He gave so great an impression of genius, however, when he came to Rome in 1725, that the Pope, after a committee of twelve Arcadians had judged him worthy of the honour, awarded him the crown of the Capitol that had once adorned Petrarch's brow.

Shortly after this profanation of literary greatness took place amid the blare of trumpets and the firing of a hundred mortars, hook-nosed Crescimbeni died (March 8, 1728). He was succeeded in the post of Custode Generale by his friend and sacerdotal colleague, the Abate Lorenzini. Republican Arcadia had developed under the former's consulship offshoots in other cities, but under Lorenzini it became an empire, charters for colonies galore being granted by him in the Parrhasian Grove, until every Italian town of any ambition whatsoever boasted a branch academy: an extension of Arcadian power made easy by the national aptitude for social organization. Although Arcadia thus expanded, it did so at the expense of its original ideals. Ceasing to be an exclusive academy for the cultivation of literature, it became the Italian

Great World of the day, a membership in it or one of its colonies being a *sine qua non* to social position. Yet the Academy, by developing social bonds between prominent Italians in different parts of the land, must have been an early factor—though doubtless a remote one—in the unification of Italy.

Such was the state of Arcadia when Goldoni entered Tuscany in the spring of 1744, after an uneventful journey across the Apennines. In Florence he passed four "truly pleasurable months," enjoying the society of men of science and letters. Hearing that Perfetti was to appear in Sienna on Assumption Day before the Academy of the Stupified (*Intronati*), he set out with good Nicoletta for the Chianti hills. On reaching Sienna he and his faithful companion were admitted as strangers to seats in the Academy.

"Perfetti occupied a sort of pulpit," Goldoni tells us, "where he sang for a quarter of an hour strophes in the style of Pindar." "Nothing could have been more beautiful or more astonishing," our dramatist continues; "he was by turns a Petrarch, a Milton, and a Rousseau: he was Pindar himself!" Indeed, he had been brought so completely under Perfetti's spell, that he paid him a visit of homage on the day following the great improvisator's exhibition of his art, their acquaintance "leading to a number of other visits." The Siennese society to which Goldoni was thus introduced proved delightful, "every gaming party being preceded by a literary conversation"; but he longed to see Tuscany; therefore he left delectable

Sienna and fared to Volterra, where he crawled into catacombs, and "getting out finally, thanks to heaven," promised himself "never to return." He halted next at Pisa, where he says he intended to stay only a few days; yet he remained some years,[4] a chance visit to the local Arcadian colony he thus describes being responsible for this complete alteration of his plans:

The first few days after my arrival at Pisa, I amused myself by seeing such curiosities as were worth while . . . but I began to be bored, because I knew nobody. Strolling one day toward the Castle, I saw a large gateway where carriages were waiting and people entering. Glancing within I beheld a vast courtyard with a garden at one end in which a number of people were seated beneath a sort of bower. I approached nearer and seeing a man in livery who had the air and graces of a functionary of importance, I asked him to whom the house belonged and the reason why so many people were gathered there. This very polite and fairly well-instructed servant was not long in satisfying my curiosity. "The assembly which you see," he said, "is a colony of the Roman Arcadia, called the Alpheusan Colony (*Colonia Alfea*) after a celebrated Greek river that watered the ancient city of Pisa in Elis." I asked if I might enter. "By all means," said the porter, who accompanied me himself to the garden gate, where he presented me to a servant of the academy, who gave me a seat in the assembly. I listened, heard both good and bad, and applauded all equally.

Everybody looked at me, and appeared anxious to know who I was. A wish to satisfy this curiosity took hold of me, so calling the man who had given me my seat and who happened to be near by, I begged him to ask the chairman of the meeting whether a stranger might be permitted to express in verse the satisfaction he had experienced. The chairman announced my desire aloud, whereupon the meeting assented.

I had in mind a sonnet I had composed in my youth for a

[4] He reached Pisa in September, 1744, and left in April, 1748.

similar occasion. Quickly changing a few words, I recited my fourteen lines in a tone and with a vocal inflexion that gave zest to both sentiment and rhyme. The sonnet appeared to have been composed on the spot and was heartily applauded. I do not know whether the meeting was to have lasted longer, but everyone got up and they all crowded about me.

In this agreeable way Goldoni entered Arcadia and there forswore Thalia again, not for the worship of Pan and Artemis, deities of that pastoral land, but to bow once more to Themis, goddess of the law; for when the shepherds of the Alpheusan colony learned that he was a briefless Venetian barrister, they begged him to resume his legal gown, promising him the meanwhile "both clients and books." Any foreign licentiate being able, as he was assured, to practise at the Pisan bar, he was persuaded "to become a civil and criminal advocate," and the Pisans being "as good as their word," he soon had "more causes than he could undertake," most of which he wisely endeavoured to settle out of court by "demonstrating the folly of litigation."

But "the devil," as he declares, "sent a theatrical company to Pisa." "Its actors were too bad" for him to think of entrusting a character comedy to their tender mercies, yet he could not resist the temptation of letting them perform *The Hundred and Four Mishaps in a Single Night,* the improvised comedy Imer's comedians had played successfully about five years before. Hearing a Pisan citizen in a coffee-house calling on heaven the next day "to preserve him from

the toothache and a hundred and four mishaps," Goldoni became so mortified that he resolved "not to go near the comedians again or think of comedy"; therefore he "redoubled his juridical ardour, and won three lawsuits within the month," from one of which, a criminal case, he "derived infinite honour."

This last concerned the fate of a young man of good family who had forced the lock of a neighbour's door and had robbed him. He was an only son, it appears, and his sisters were unmarried, circumstances that inspired our lawyer to save him from the galleys. After "satisfying the complaining party," he changed the lock on his door so that the key of his client's room would fit it. Thus he made it appear that the defendant, after entering the apartment he had robbed, by mistake instead of deliberately, had been suddenly tempted by money he saw spread out before him; a ruse whereby the court was induced to impose a short term in jail, instead of the dreaded sentence to the galleys.

The culprit's family was "very well satisfied" with him, Goldoni assures us, "and the criminal judge complimented him." Again he had begun auspiciously the practice of the law. At Pisa there were, however, no rich old maids or bewitching nieces to ensnare him; yet he was enticed from legal paths by his old friend, the comedian Sacchi, who wrote him for a comedy. Working "by day at the bar and by night at his play," he finished *The Servant of Two Masters* and despatched it to Venice, closing his door the

meanwhile at nightfall and going no more to the Arcadians' coffee-house. When he returned to the pastoral fold, he was "reproached for his neglect of poetry," but given nevertheless by the Custode of the Alpheusan Colony a diploma of full Arcadian membership, issued by the parent academy in Rome. Polisseno Fegeio was the bucolic name bestowed upon him and he was invested with the Phegeian Fields. "We Arcadians," he exclaims, "are rich, as you may perceive, dear reader. We possess lands in Greece: we water them with the sweat of our brows in order that we may gather laurel branches, but the Turks sow them with grain and plant them with vines, and they laugh at both our titles and our songs."

Although by his own confession he was "never a good poet," he continued to write "sonnets, odes, and other pieces of lyricism" for the meetings of the academy. In the meantime, Sacchi, who sent him a present which he says he did not expect, demanded another comedy, and he had no peace of mind until he had despatched to Venice the play[5] the Parisian success of which, seventeen years later, inspired the Italian actors of the French capital to offer him a professional engagement.

His intention in all probability was to settle permanently in Pisa, practising law, making professional trips to Florence or Lucca, and satisfying his natural desires now and then by writing occasional comedies

[5] *Il Figlio d'Arlecchino perduto e ritrovato.*

or sonnets to be read before the meetings of the local Arcadians. He had "causes in every court and clients in every rank of life," he assures us, and he thought "the whole town was for him," until seeking governmental preferment, he learned that although he had "become naturalized in the hearts of individuals, in the opinion of the community he was still an alien." In the hope of getting at least some of the "oil, corn, and money they brought," he sought all the sinecures a late Pisan lawyer had enjoyed as the attorney of several religious bodies, but obtained none of them, because, so he says, he had been in Pisa but two years and a half, whereas his competitors had "for four years at least been taking steps to succeed the deceased."

"Out of twenty posts," he laments, "not one for me!" This was a disappointment that made him look upon his profession as a "casual and precarious manner of obtaining a livelihood." Whilst in this morose mood his chamber was invaded one morning by a stranger whose glib tongue fatefully turned the course of his life into its natural channel and made the obtaining of his livelihood indeed precarious. His own words shall describe this propitious meeting:

> One day when I was very deep in thought, a stranger who wished to speak to me was announced. I saw crossing the hall a man nearly six feet in height and proportionally large and fat, who had in his hand a cane and a round hat of English shape.
>
> He entered my office with measured steps. I arose. Making a picturesque gesture by way of telling me not to disturb myself,

he approached. I asked him to be seated. This is our conversation:

"Sir," he said, "I have not the honour of being known by you, but you probably know my father and uncle in Venice; I am your very humble servant Darbes (*sic*)." [6]

"What! Monsieur Darbes, son of the postmaster at Friuli, the lad believed to be lost, who was searched for so much, and mourned for so greatly?"

"Yes, sir, that prodigal son, who has not yet fallen on his knees before his father."

"Why do you postpone giving him that consolation?"

"My family, my relatives, or my country will never see me except crowned with laurels."

"What is your calling, sir?"

Arising, he patted his rotundity, and in a tone of pride mingled with facetiousness, said: "Sir, I am an actor."

"Every talent," said I, "is estimable, provided the possessor is able to distinguish himself."

"I am," he answered, "the Pantaloon of a troupe now at Leghorn. I am not the most inconspicuous of my comrades, and the public is not loath to crowd to the plays in which my character appears. Medebac, our manager, travelled a long way to unearth me; I do not dishonour my relatives, my country, or my profession, and, sir, without boasting (slapping his belly once more), Garelli [7] is dead; Darbes has taken his place."

I intended to compliment him, but he threw himself into a comic attitude that made me burst into laughter, and so prevented me from continuing.

"It is not through vainglory," he proceeded, "that I have paraded the advantages I enjoy in my profession. But I am an actor and I make myself known to an author of whom I have need."

"You have need of me?"

"Yes, sir; I know you by reputation: you are as courteous as you are skilful, and you will not refuse."

[6] Cesare D'Arbes, born in Venice about 1710, died in that city in 1778. "The greatest Pantaloon of his time," says Luigi Rasi (op. cit.).

[7] A Venetian Pantaloon, known as *Il Pantalone eloquente*, who died in 1740.

"I have work to do; I can't manage it."

"I respect your work; you may write the play at your leisure, when the spirit moves you."

Seizing my snuff-box while he was talking, and taking a pinch of snuff, he dropped a few gold ducats into it, and closing it, he threw it on the table with one of those pieces of stage business that seem to hide the very thing you would be glad to have discovered. Not wishing to lend myself to such a jest, I opened my snuff-box.

"Pray, don't be angry," he said; "it is merely a payment on account for the paper."

I tried to give him back his money, but posturing and bowing, he got up, backed himself toward the door and went out.

After asking himself what should be done under the circumstances, Goldoni took what seemed to him "the better," and to us, the more pleasing course in that he informed D'Arbes that he would write the play desired. The Pantaloon replied that "a comedy by Goldoni would be the sword and buckler with which he would challenge all the theatres of the world." He had bet a hundred gold ducats with his manager, he said, that he would obtain a comedy by Goldoni and he concluded a fulsome letter by saying that he wished his rôle to be that of "a young man without a mask drawn in the manner of the principal character of an old art comedy, called *Pantaloon, a Fop (Pantalon Paroncin)*. In accordance with this suggestion Goldini penned "within three weeks" *Elegant Anthony (Tonin bella grazia)*, and carried the manuscript to Leghorn himself.[8]

[8] Saverio Francesco Bartoli, a contemporary Thespian, known as the Actor's Plutarch, published at Padua in 1782 a work entitled *Notizie*

There he read it to D'Arbes who "appeared well satisfied, and with many ceremonies, bows, and interrupted words" he gave our author the amount of the bet he had won from his manager, whereupon "in order to avoid receiving thanks," he fled under the pretext of showing the new comedy to the latter.

While Goldoni was awaiting dinner in his lonely room at an inn, Medebac,[9] the manager, called, accompanied by D'Arbes and, after "overwhelming him with politeness," invited him to dine. His soup being served, the dramatist declined, but D'Arbes and Medebac dragged him away, and on the manager's threshold they were met by Madame Medebac, "a young, pretty, and well-built actress," whom Goldoni found "as estimable in manners as in talent."

After "a very respectable family dinner served with the utmost order and neatness," he was taken to the theatre, where out of compliment to him *Griselda*

istoriche de' comici italiani, che fiorirono intorno all' anno MDL fino a' giorni presenti, in which is presented a hitherto unpublished sonnet by Goldoni, as well as a letter written by him to Cesare D'Arbes at Leghorn and dated at Pisa, August 13, 1745. In this letter Goldoni says that the new comedy (manifestly *Elegant Anthony*) "is not yet clear of the meteors that surround it," while he asks to be remembered to Medebac, manager of the troupe in which D'Arbes was playing. As Goldoni states in his Memoirs that he had been in Pisa two years and a half at the time he asked for the sinecures of the dead Pisan advocate (or March, 1747), and as he places D'Arbes's visit to him subsequent to that event, the date of the letter to that actor is manifestly a misprint for 1747. See Vol. II, edition of the Municipality of Venice.

[9] Girolamo Medebac (or Medebach, originally Metembach), born at Rome, about 1706, died subsequently to Dec. 1781, when Bartoli recorded that "he was not far from his ninetieth year, and in enviable health." L. Rasi (op. cit.) accords him the distinction of being "the greatest manager of the XVIIIth century, a large part, if not all, of his celebrity being due to the artistic bonds that united him to Carlo Goldoni."

was substituted for the improvised comedy that had been announced. This play "was not entirely his work," he confesses; nevertheless "his self-love was flattered." He was "better pleased," however, on the following day when *The Clever Woman,* "hitherto his favourite comedy," was presented. Although he had written this play before his departure from Venice, he had never seen it played. It was "a pleasure," he acknowledges, "to see it so well performed," and he complimented Madame Medebac and her husband upon their acting, "the natural sweetness" of the former, "her pathetic voice, her intelligence, and her histrionism" raising her in his estimation "above all the actresses he had ever known."

A few days after his vanity had been thus doubly flattered, Medebac, to whom he had confided his "mortifying experiences in Pisa," made him the dramaturgic offer that brought him back to Thalia's shrine, there to remain a constant votary throughout his days. Medebac proposed leasing a theatre in Venice for a term of five or six years, provided that Goldoni would contract to serve as its playwright during a like period. "It required no great effort to turn him toward comedy," says the latter; so a provisional contract was forthwith drawn up. But good Nicoletta had gone to Genoa to visit her family, and though "he knew her docility, Goldoni owed her," he assures us, "both esteem and friendship," wherefore he returned to Pisa to

await her arrival and approval before sending his signature to Leghorn.[10] This he did in September, 1747,[11] although he did not join Medebac's forces until April of the following year, six months' time having been given him in which to arrange his affairs. His muse and his pen were again at the disposal of an individual. "A French author," he confesses, "would think it a singular engagement for a man of letters, who ought to enjoy liberty," but in Italy there were "no court pensions and royal gifts," therefore he was content with his lot, for "his plays were to be accepted without being read, and paid for in advance."

Before leaving Tuscany, he revisited Florence, and there, at a *séance* of the Arcadian colony, known as *The Academy of the Apathists,* he witnessed an absurd literary rite which consisted in propounding abstruse questions to a child of ten, called a *Sibillone,* or great Sibyl. As the infant oracle was required to reply by a single word, the answers, as may readily be imagined, were usually devoid of sense; therefore an academician was appointed to interpret them, a task requiring considerable discursive agility. On the occasion of Goldoni's visit, the question asked was: "Why do women weep more readily than

[10] L. T. Belgrano suggests that Goldoni went to Genoa at this time, a supposition founded on Goldoni's statement in his dedication of *La Donna sola* to Agostino Connio to the effect that he had seen his father-in-law twice. This is merely a guess, however, like the surmise of Von Löhner that Goldoni sent his signature to Venice instead of to Leghorn.

[11] In his memoirs Goldoni says 1746, but this is *more veneto.*

men?" and the "great Sibyl's" answer was the meaningless word "straws." Yet a lusty abbé discoursed at length to demonstrate that "nothing could have been more decisive or satisfactory" than the oracle's answer, the trend of his argument being that as straw is the most frail of plant substances, and woman more frail than man, frailty is the cause of woman's tears.

To what precious depths had Arcadia sunk! Yet, sane Goldoni was gulled to a considerable degree by this hocus-pocus, for he avers that "to display more erudition and precision in a matter that seemed so insusceptible of it, was quite impossible. Luckily his trunks had reached the Florentine custom-house; therefore he was able to escape from this Arcadian fool-trap before its vapid air had entirely vitiated his inborn common sense.

Proceeding to Mantua, he joined Medebac there and with faithful Nicoletta passed a month "comfortably lodged" in the house of a retired soubrette, who fortunately for his peace of mind had reached the age of eighty-five. The climate of marshy Mantua, however, did not agree with him, and his time was passed mostly in bed. He managed nevertheless to finish a couple of comedies "with which Medebac appeared satisfied," whereupon he was "permitted to go to Modena," where he passed the summer. "Toward the end of July" Medebac and his troupe arrived in Modena and Goldoni gave him a third comedy.[12] In September in company with

[12] Possibly, as Carlo Borghi suggests, *La Vedova scaltra.*

an untried aggregation of actors he reached Venice to tempt metropolitan fate in the Teatro Sant' Angelo, the playhouse Medebac had leased.

He had been away from the *campielli* and the canals of his beloved birthplace for five long years, and he found "a great satisfaction" in returning to "the land that had always been dear to him." His doting mother who, despite his vagabondizing, "had never complained of him," dwelt with her sister in the Court of St. George, near Saint Mark's,[13] and there he and good Nicoletta went to live. While he is in the full enjoyment of this domestic peace, let us take a glimpse of the theatrical world of Venice, to which he had returned a better and more valiant dramatist than he was when Giuseppe Imer had been his manager and the San Samuele the scene of his prentice endeavours.

Whenever an ox-drawn chariot of Thespis lumbered into Mestre or Fusina after its summer tour on terra firma, and the wan actresses huddled beneath its canvas awning saw the campanile of St. Mark's and other graceful towers they loved outlined against the autumn sky, they knew that rest and joy were close at hand, for Venice was the players' paradise; its horizon, in the apt words of Philippe Monnier, "seeming to be bounded by footlights, a sky border, and a prompter's box."[14] Too light-hearted to read, its people made plays their literature, and, after their

[13] San Giorgio de' Greci, much nearer to St. Mark's than San Giorgio degli Schiavoni: Guido Mazzoni, *Memorie di Carlo Goldoni.*

[14] *Venise au XVIIIe siècle.*

carnival pranks, their chief diversion. New plays were public events, the merits of rival dramatists a matter for general debate and even altercation; for when, as will be seen, Goldoni and the Abate Chiari became rivals, all Venice, from patrician to gondolier, from great lady to handmaid, gestured and shrilled their predilections, whilst critics spoiled more perfectly good paper than was wasted when the pedants of France were yelping at the heels of Molière.

The Venetian stage, as an organized entity, dates from the sixteenth century, at the beginning of which Thalia came to the city of lagoons and drove the religious plays and the tragedies of the pedants from that lightsome town.[15] But there were no permanent playhouses then, trestles for a performance being placed either in the piazza or the palace of some rich Morosini, Trevisan, or Mocenigo. In 1527 Francesco Cherea, a favourite of Pope Leo X, who had escaped from Rome during the sack, produced Latin comedies in Venice, as well as some which he had written himself; and at about the same time Angelo Beolco, who was known as *Il Ruzzante,* crossed the lagoons from Padua, his birthplace, with dialect farces which he and his masked comrades performed in patrician halls so excellently that he was styled the new Roscius.[16]

[15] A decree of the Signoria, Dec. 29, 1509, indicates that comedy had begun to be performed in Venice only a short time previously. D'Ancona: op. cit.

[16] Pompeo Molmenti: *La Storia di Venezia nella vita privata.*

Although Palladio built in 1565 a wooden theatre at Venice, fourteen years before he began at Vicenza the construction of the Teatro Olimpico, it was only a temporary affair, the first permanent Venetian playhouse not being constructed until this great architect had been dead fully a quarter of a century.[17] During the generations that followed Beolco and Palladio, play-giving and theatre-building flourished so congenially in Venice that when Goldoni reached the city with Medebac's troupe, seven regular playhouses—more than obtained in Paris then and more than are to be found in Venice now—were in operation. Each was named after the titular saint of the parish in which it was situated, that of San Cassiano being the oldest, although the San Giovanni Crisostomo, where the lyrical tragedies of Metastasio and Zeno were given, was the most important of the playhouses named by Goldoni in his memoirs.[18] Three of these were devoted to comedy and at each of them he was in turn employed, first at the San Samuele when Imer was his manager, then at the Sant' Angelo under Medebac, and finally at the San Luca, the property of two

[17] Palladio died in 1580. The San Cassiano, oldest of Venetian theatres, was built early in the seventeenth century and rebuilt in 1637, after its destruction by fire. Pompeo Molmenti: op. cit.

[18] Goldoni says: "In Italy the playhouses (*salles de spectacles*) are called theatres and in Venice there are seven, each bearing the name of the titular saint of its parish." Apparently he refers only to theatres regularly operated throughout the theatrical season by professional companies, as there were at that time fully fourteen theatres in Venice of one sort or another, the number in the previous century having totalled eighteen. P. Molmenti: op. cit.

brothers named Vendramin, where his Venetian theatrical career terminated.[19]

These Venetian theatres were owned by wealthy patricians, who retained the receipts of the boxes, which, like the opera boxes of to-day, were rented for the season. A ticket to a box did not include admission to the house, a box-holder being required to pay the entrance fee, which, according to Goldoni, "never exceeded the value of a Roman paolo, or ten French sous."[20] "As the daily receipts could not be large," he continues, "they were not worth being run after by a playwright"; yet the Venetian theatres were commodious, the San Luca, for instance, being so vast that in it "natural or delicate movements, the subtleties, the pleasantries, in a word, true comedy, lost greatly." Indeed, in both size and construction these theatres resembled the continental opera-house of the present day, old engravings of the San Giovanni Crisostomo and of the San Samuele showing them to have possessed large, deep stages, orchestra pits, and five tiers of encircling boxes, some of which were placed upon the stage, like the *avant-scènes* at the Paris opera.

Beginning early in October, the theatrical season

[19] The two remaining playhouses referred to by Goldoni, are the San Benedetto and the San Moisè, at the latter of which many of his musical plays were performed. With the former he seems to have had no connection.

[20] According to P. Molmenti, "In the beginning the price of a ticket to the theatre was four lire, corresponding to about two lire in our day, and then, in 1647, it went down to a fourth of a ducat, or about 80 centesimi of our day." In Goldoni's day, therefore, the price had gone down still more.

continued until the novena of Christmas. On December 26 began the Winter or Carnival season, which lasted until Ash Wednesday, when the theatres were closed. During the two weeks of the feast of Ascension the theatres were opened again and there was a short season of plays and operas, but when spring appeared, the theatrical companies betook themselves to terra firma, there to tour until the chill of autumn brought the world of fashion back to Venice after its *villeggiatura* on the banks of the Brenta.

With the apparent intention of permitting play lovers to attend several performances on the same day, the Venetian theatres opened at different hours. These performances, however, were not seemly events, such as we are accustomed to in our modern playhouses. The boxes were the scene of frivolity and amours. Many of their occupants wore masks, and sometimes carnival costumes of indecent scantiness; indeed, in the words of an Italian writer, "almost every box was a temple of Venus." [21] In them the fashionable world met, or young men of wealth flaunted their mistresses boldly in the public gaze. They belonged to the owners of the theatre and were let by them for the season to fellow-patricians. Besides being lovers' trysts, they were the rendezvous of groups of intimate friends, who gossiped and flirted while pelting the hoi-polloi in the pit below with oranges, or even spitting upon them.

[21] Vittorio Malamani: *Il Settecento a Venezia.*

As in the case of Molière's parterre, the denizens of Goldoni's pit were a various rabble, who applauded and hissed at will or rent the fetid air with coarse laughter and catcalls, while the patricians above them giggled, sneezed, and yawned. The benches were of wood, well polished with use, and they were scorned by ladies, though women of the people occupied them. During the *entr'actes* a ticket-taker with a candle-end in hand passed among them, collecting the modest price of the seats. No places were reserved for civil or military functionaries, no soldiers were on guard, nor policemen either, save an occasional catch-poll (*sbirro*) in civil attire, who intervened only when force was indispensable. At a popular play the gondoliers, who ordinarily were admitted to the pit, were forced to wait outside the theatre, since long before the performance began, the seats were filled by servants holding them for their masters, or by speculators ready to sell them at a profit. An hour before the performance two wretched candles were lighted. No lights glowed in the auditorium even after the curtain rose, except an occasional candle in the region of the upper boxes or the smudging tallow dips of the musicians.

Between the acts girls with baskets on their arms passed between the rows of benches selling oranges, anisette, cakes, fritters, and chestnuts, while in the boxes coffee and ices were served. "At six or seven paces from the entrance to the pit," its classic missiles, baked apples and pears, were sold, although the

actor who won its favour had little to fear from its wrath, since he enjoyed in the affections of the public the same unmerited ascendency over the dramatist that is held by his modern compeer, the matinée idol. Though the authorities proclaimed him to be "a person detested of God," the popular actor was received familiarly in patrician households, and when he appeared on the stage he was greeted by such affectionate cries as: "Blessed be thou! Blessed be he who fathered thee!" or "Darling, I throw myself at thy feet!" In his wake swarmed his cronies, all of whom were dead-heads and some of whom "got in his way on the stage, only to speak ill of the play." At the end of the performance, it was the privilege of a popular actor to announce the next play, but if the one that had first been given happened to have pleased the audience, his voice was drowned by cries of "the same, give us the same!" Upon the first and the last night of the season a favourite actress would recite to the audience complimentary verses; but not until Goldoni had ceased to write for the Venetian stage was it customary for the mere author to appear before the curtain in response to applause.[22]

Although Metastasio's music-tragedies had, like our modern opera, become fashionable, improvised comedies occupied the purely histrionic boards to a far greater degree than plays serious in tone, the pranks of Arlecchino being more congenial to the mirth-seeking, laughter-loving Venetian than trag-

[22] P. Molmenti: op. cit.

edy or tragi-comedy. Indeed, once when a worthy abate had the temerity to present a tragedy [23] replete with scenes of horror and calamity, the audience fled, creating a fiasco that was waggishly parodied in a tragic farce, wherein after all the characters had gone off to battle, the prompter appeared, to tell the expectant audience that it would wait in vain for the play to continue, because all the characters had been killed.

But it was a decadent Improvised Comedy that reigned in Venice during the first half of the eighteenth century. Novelty was the one essential, and when the vivacious Italian plots were exhausted, Greece and Rome, myth and legend, were ransacked, as well as the cloak-and-sword drama of Spain, for novel subjects to exploit. It mattered not that Æneas became a Captain Fracasso and Menelaus a Pantaloon, so long as a plot new to the Venetian stage was presented with points sufficient for the actors to hang their *lazzi* upon. Indeed, the comedy of that day might be likened to a kaleidoscope in which the sword of Fracasso, the guitar of Scaramuccia, the slap-stick of Arlecchino, the spectacles of Tartaglia, the red trousers of Pantalone, the plumed cap of Coviello, and the wine-stains of Il Dottore were ever shifting into fatuous combinations, whereby the mimes who wore or bore them, might call forth laughter from a laughter-loving people. In Philippe Monnier's [24] pleasing hyperbole,

[23] *Ulisse il Giovane,* by the Abate Lazzarini. [24] Op. cit.

these nimble adepts in buffoonery were "marvellous artists of laughter, sowers of divine Gaiety's golden seed, servants of the unforeseen, and kings of godsend." Shorn of the exaggeration, they may safely be acclaimed as first-rate actors, skilled in developing their rôles from a scribbled scenario that hung in the wings; for with a *zibaldone* of familiar proverbs, quips, sallies, songs, and cock-and-bull stories to draw upon, they invented dialogue that would keep a play "moving at a hellish rate."

Cesare D'Arbes, the buffoon responsible for Goldoni's return to his calling, was "an admirable comedian," whose acting of the rôle of Pantalone was "incomparable"; therefore, since Teodora Medebac, an actress "estimable above all others whom he knew," was also a member of the troupe with which he journeyed to Venice in the autumn of 1748, he had worthy histrionic material with which to present his comedies.

He found the Venetian stage in the condition that has just been outlined. Being "strangers and newcomers," Medebac's troupe "were obliged," he says, "to struggle against experienced rivals," and they "had great difficulty in obtaining protectors and friends." The Teatro Sant' Angelo, however, which the manager had leased, was "a playhouse less fatiguing to the actors than more spacious theatres, yet sufficiently large to produce adequate receipts, provided that popular plays held its boards." It is apparent, therefore, that the success of these new-

comers depended upon the skill of the dramatist they had brought with them. His apprenticeship with Imer's troupe had laid, so he believed, "the foundations for the Italian comedy he intended to build." Homogeneous in design, his structure was to be a true temple to Thalia, without so much as a niche for her tragic sister. He was equipped with experience both in life and in stage-craft, and having, as he declares, "no rivals to contend with," he began at once "the construction of the new edifice," a work at which he was to labour ardently for fourteen years ere the scorn of critics and the success of rivals drove him in chagrin to seek an asylum in a foreign land.

VI

PLAYWRIGHT OF THE SANT' ANGELO THEATRE

FROM the time of his return to Venice in the autumn of 1748 until his departure for Paris in the spring of 1762, Goldoni worked unflaggingly, during this period writing fully a hundred comedies, several tragedies and tragi-comedies, and nearly fifty merry plays for music. Moreover, his genius attained its zenith at that time, his best plays almost without exception being penned during these fourteen toilsome years. Passionately attached to the stage, he was engrossed in its demands. No longer a dilettante, nor a briefless lawyer, no longer a young vagabond inspired by *wanderlust,* he was a man past forty, who to earn his bread had articled himself to an exacting manager, his task being to furnish dramatic material of a nature sufficiently popular to make the operation of a theatre profitable.

A year's run of a new play is not uncommon in our day; yet the presentation of one of his comedies for a month was the greatest success he might expect. Sometimes he was obliged to withdraw after four or five performances a piece that had failed, and rush into rehearsal some unfinished comedy, the

final acts of which he wrote while shaping the earlier ones to fit the idiosyncracies of the actors. Living in an age when literature was deemed a pleasant avocation, he made it a vocation, and led, meanwhile, a valiant crusade against the antiquated and lewd comedy of his native land; an arduous task indeed, since his audience was inured to the time-worn *lazzi* of Arlecchino and Brighella, while the comedians for whom he wrote, accustomed to the use of masks, were without practice in learning their parts. Moreover, the Sant' Angelo theatre which Medebac had engaged, had as competitors in the field of comedy two playhouses of established reputation. "I do not remember what play was given at the opening of the Sant' Angelo," Goldoni says, "but I know well that our newly arrived troupe had to struggle against very skilful rivals."

Gasparo and Lucia Raffi, the parents of Teodora Medebac, the leading lady, had once managed a troupe of tight-rope dancers who were in the habit of performing in Venice at carnival time. Madame Medebac, so Goldoni assures us, "danced on the rope passably well, but on the ground she danced with extreme grace." It was customary, it appears, for some members of the Raffi troupe to perform acrobatically in a booth in the Piazza San Marco by day and histrionically by night in the little San Moisè theatre, of which Medebac, who instructed them in the art of comedy, was then manager and leading man. Teodora Raffi became his wife, as well as the

MOUNTEBANK JUGGLERY

Museo Correr

leading lady of his company; her flighty aunt, Maddalena Raffi, became the soubrette, and the latter's husband, Giuseppe Marliani, the Brighella; while our old friend, Cesare D'Arbes, the pantaloon, married Gasparo Raffi's sister-in-law, Rosalina, whose first husband had been a German mountebank.[1]

These acrobatic histrions were loved and appreciated, Goldoni tells us,[2] "not only for their valour and ability as rope-dancers, but for their decent and discreet way of living under the excellent management of the most worthy Raffi and the faultless conduct of the prudent, devoted, and charitable Signora Lucia, his wife." When, after strolling about the mainland for several years under Medebac's direction, they returned to Venice and entered into open competition with the companies of the San Samuele and the San Luca theatres, they were reproached with their humble origin and derided as rope-dancers. Madame Medebac's acting in *Griselda* soon made a favourable impression, however, and in *The Clever Woman* she "succeeded in establishing the company's reputation."

But Cesare D'Arbes must needs be fitted with a part as well. He had never played without a mask, and fearing odious comparison, he dared not act the Pantaloons Goldoni had created for Francesco Colinetti of Imer's troupe; therefore, he decided to make his Venetian début unmasked in *Elegant Anthony* (*Tonin bella grazia*), the piece written for him

[1] L. Rasi: Op. cit. [2] Preface to Vol. XVII, Pasquali edition.

while its author was still at Pisa. As the latter says:

> We placed it in rehearsal. The actors laughed uproariously and I laughed too; we believed that the public would do likewise, but that public, which they say has no mind, had a very strong and decided one at the first performance of this play, and I was obliged to withdraw it immediately. Under such circumstances I have never been indignant with the public or the actors, but have always begun coolly to examine myself, and this time I saw that the fault was mine. . . . I shall only say in extenuation that when I wrote this comedy I had been without practice for four years. My mind had been filled with professional matters, and I was troubled and in ill-humour, and to make my bad luck complete, my actors thought it was good. We shared in this folly and we paid for it equally.

D'Arbes was chagrined by his failure, but in *The Prudent Man* (*L'Uomo prudente*), another comedy Goldoni had brought from the provinces, this Pantaloon appeared in his mask so successfully "that he was acclaimed generally as the most accomplished actor then upon the stage." Noting that in real life he displayed the characteristics of both a worldling and a witling, Goldoni, bent on making him "shine with his face unmasked," put forth *The Venetian Twins* (*I Due gemelli veneziani*), a comedy of mistaken identity, in which D'Arbes played both a clever and a doltish Dromio "with such incomparable art that he found himself at the summit of his glory and joy." The manager was "no less content at seeing the success of his enterprise assured," and Goldoni was "a sharer in the general satisfaction," being "welcomed with open arms, and applauded," as he declares, "far

more than he deserved." This success set the critics yelping, "the troupe of rope-dancers" being more snappishly pursued by jealous rivals than the author; but "their credit increased daily" and when for the carnival season Goldoni drew *The Artful Widow* from his magic bag, his triumph, as well as theirs, was complete.

Since the merits of this comedy are rehearsed in a subsequent chapter, it is only necessary to remind the reader that this spirited stage picture of Venetian society is one of the two plays that first distinguished its author as the creator of a national comedy, the other being its immediate successor, *The Respectable Girl,* a comedy in which Goldoni first appears as the naturalistic painter of the life of the common people of Venice. As he says with reference to *The Artful Widow:*

> I had given very lucky plays, but none had been so lucky as this one. It received thirty consecutive performances and has been played everywhere with the same good fortune. The birth of my reform could not have been more auspicious. I still had a play to give for the Carnival: it was necessary that the closing should not belie the first successes of this decisive year, and I found the work which I needed to crown my labours. . . . This play, *The Respectable Girl,* had all the success I could possibly wish; the closing could not have been more brilliant. Behold my reform already well under way! What good luck! What joy for me!

With the scoring of this triumph for his ambition to reform Italian comedy terminated the provisional contract Goldoni had signed with Medebac in September, 1747. So pleased were both manager and

playwright with their common success, that a four years' agreement was concluded between them on March 10, 1749, by the terms of which Goldoni, officially called "the Poet of the Medebac troupe," agreed for an annual salary of four hundred and fifty Venetian ducats [3] to write eight comedies and two operas a year, as well as to rewrite old comedies, assist at rehearsals, and follow the troupe during the summer season to the various cities where his plays might be produced.[4] Furthermore, he was forbidden to write comedies for other theatres in Venice, but might pen libretti for musical pieces.

Having so appalling a contract to fulfil, it is not surprising that his life became less venturesome. No man required to write eight comedies a year, could have many idle moments for Satan's employment; soubrettes disturbed him less frequently during those busy years, and the merry hazards of his earlier life gave way to theatrical routine. In a word, genial Goldoni became an untiring dramatist, employed early and late at the work of conceiving, writing, and rehearsing plays. No sooner was a Venetian theatrical season ended than he was off to terra firma with Medebac's troupe, following it from town to town, writing new comedies the meanwhile, and trying many of them out before provincial audiences.

He had moreover to quell the jealousies of ac-

[3] About $675—the Venetian ducat, according to Larousse, being worth 7.47 francs.

[4] *Commedie di Goldoni,* Paperini (Florence) edition, 1753–55, vol. VII, introduction to *La Donna vendicativa.*

tresses and repel the attacks of enemies. After his first great success had been won by *The Artful Widow,* a host of antagonists arose to confound him, the exultation of the fourteen glorious years he passed in Venice being frequently marred by the attempts of envious rivals to undo him. His literary quarrels being discussed later, the following plaint shall suffice for indicating that, like every great writer, he was a target for the venomous shafts of less successful men:

> While I worked on the old foundation of Italian comedy and presented only plays partly written and partly in outline, I was permitted to enjoy in peace the applause of the pit; but the moment I announced myself as an author, inventor, and poet, bright minds awoke from their lethargy and found me worthy of attention and criticism.

His second season in Venice (1749–50) was far less successful than his first. It began with a revival of *The Artful Widow,*[5] and no sooner had this play reappeared upon the boards of the Sant' Angelo theatre than the comedians of the San Samuele put forth a parody of it, written by the Abate Pietro Chiari,[6] his principal rival in the field of comedy. This base attack so nettled Goldoni, that in spite of his avowed principle of never answering critics, he wrote a dia-

[5] In his memoirs Goldoni, writing some thirty years later, is inexact in giving the number and sequence of the plays presented during this season. He places the revival of *The Artful Widow* at carnival time, but Gradenigo, a contemporary, under date of Oct. 13, 1749, records in his *Notatori* the literary quarrel which resulted from the revival of that play. Vittorio Malamani in *Ateneo Veneto,* Jan.-Feb., 1907.

[6] *La Scuola delle vedove.*

logic reply, which he caused to be printed and circulated throughout the coffee-houses and assembly-rooms of Venice.[7]

But he was failing in the fulfilment of his contract to write eight comedies for each theatrical season. During the autumn and winter he produced but five new plays;[8] and when the season was waning Medebac began to clamour for the full quota of novelties. Goldoni would have preferred finishing the season with revivals of his past successes, but the insistence of his manager obliged him to place in rehearsal *The Lucky Heiress* (*L'Erede fortunata*), a comedy with which he was "not content" and which, as he had foreseen, failed dismally. To add to the embarrassment of both Goldoni and Medebac, "the excellent Pantaloon," Cesare D'Arbes, "who was one of the mainstays of the company," left Venice to enter the service of the King of Poland. So popular was this actor, that when the news of his departure became known, the box-holders began to refuse the renewal of their subscriptions for the ensuing season, a state of affairs that called for drastic action, lest the doom of the Sant' Angelo company be sealed. To close the season *The Respectable Girl* and its sequel[9] were revived, and in the *Complimento,* or verses with which it was customary for the most

[7] *Prologo apologetico alla commedia la Vedova scaltra.*

[8] In his memoirs Goldoni mentions only two: *La Buona moglie* and *Il Cavaliere e la dama,* but *L'Avvocato veneziano, Il Padre di famiglia* and *La Famiglia dell' antiquario* were, according to the most accurate data obtainable, produced during this season.

[9] *La Buona moglie.*

popular actress to flatter the audience at the conclusion of the last performance of the year, Goldoni stepped into the breach that his failures had made in the defences of Medebac's enterprise, in the bold manner he thus describes:

> Offended on my side by the ill temper of the public, and being blindly confident that I amounted to something, I wrote for the leading actress the *Complimento* with which the season ended, and made her say in bad verse, but very clearly and very positively, that the author who worked for her and her comrades agreed to present sixteen new comedies during the ensuing year.[10] The troupe on the one hand and the public on the other at once gave me a certain and very flattering proof of their confidence, for the actors did not hesitate to accept an engagement upon my word, and a week later all the boxes were let for the ensuing year. When I made this agreement, I had not a single subject in mind; yet I had to keep my word or die. My friends trembled; my enemies laughed. I comforted the former; I made game of the latter. . . . It was a terrible year for me, which I cannot recall without trembling again. Sixteen comedies in three acts, each requiring for its performance, according to Italian usage, two hours and a half!

The theatrical season of 1750-51 was indeed "terrible," and the wonder is that Goldoni did not die in the attempt to keep his defiant promise to the Venetian public. He had agreed to produce sixteen new comedies, which in addition to the labour of writing, meant the onerous task of rehearsal. In length, including stage-directions, his comedies average

[10] The wording in the *Complimento* is as follows: "He will produce comedies altogether new. And if he be alive and his imagination does not fail him [he will produce] one a week at least." Since the theatrical season lasted about sixteen weeks, this is equivalent to promising as many comedies, a promise which was kept.

about twenty-five thousand words, hence he had contracted to write four hundred thousand words, or the equivalent of a newspaper column a day of the most difficult kind of imaginative work. Not only was he called upon to pen the average daily stint of the modern newspaper man, but he must accomplish it in dialogue that would unfold a dramatic story vivaciously and entertainingly. He had, moreover, to invent the subjects for his sixteen comedies, as well as to construct their plots. The physical task he had set himself was the equivalent of writing five novels of the present day, but in imaginative requirements it was far greater. When it is borne in mind that a prolific novelist produces no more than two novels a year, and that a popular playwright, such as the late Clyde Fitch, including both original plays and adaptations, placed upon his stage a little more than forty dramatic pieces in a period of twenty years, some idea may be gained of the gigantic nature of Goldoni's undertaking.

No sooner had he informed the Venetian public that he would produce a new comedy each week during the ensuing theatrical year, than he went with Medebac's troupe on its summer tour to Mantua and Milan.[11] In the former city he "did not lose his time," and there "worked day and night." Play-writing, however, was not his only task. Antonio Matteucci,

[11] Goldoni in his memoirs says "Bologna and Mantua," but Messrs. Malamani, Brognoligo, Mazzoni, and Spinelli, all agree in saying that this should be Mantua and Milan, Goldoni's error being attributable to the advanced age at which he wrote.

an intelligent young pantaloon, known on the stage as *Il Collalto,* had been engaged to replace D'Arbes and as he had appeared only in improvised comedy, to coach him in the new method of acting unmasked became Goldoni's special care. He wrote, too, occasional verses for the weddings or funerals of his distinguished friends, and undertook, besides, the editing of his plays, for the publication of which he had arranged before leaving Venice.

In a letter he wrote from Mantua to Bettinelli, his publisher, he laments that the work necessitated by the sixteen plays, had prevented him from penning a preface to the first volume, but when he reached Milan, fatigue apparently overcame his will, for in another letter to Bettinelli [12] from this latter city, he complains that the July heat prevented him from working. He had energy, however, for social diversions, and accepted the hospitality of Count Giuseppe Antonio Arconati-Visconti, a Lombardian diplomat, through whose patronage Medebac had obtained the use for that summer of the Ducal Theatre at Milan.[13] When Goldoni returned to Venice after that arduous summer on the mainland, he brought with him the manuscript of seven of the sixteen comedies he had promised his public. Three of these had, to use theatrical parlance, been "tried out" at Mantua and four at Milan; therefore, when the season opened at the Sant' Angelo theatre

[12] G. M. Urbani de Ghelthof: *Lettere di Carlo Goldoni.*

[13] Adolfo and Alessandro Spinelli: *Lettere di Carlo Goldoni e di Girolamo Medebach al conte Giuseppe Antonio Arconati-Visconti.*

on October 5th, nine of the sixteen comedies were merely on the stocks or still to be conceived.

The first of this remarkable series to be presented on the Venetian stage was *The Comic Theatre* (*Il Teatro comico*), a confession of faith rather than a play, in which Goldoni, after announcing the titles of the sixteen comedies he intended to present [14] took occasion to berate the antiquated methods of the Improvised Comedy, at the same time preparing the mind of his public for the reform he was about to launch, this play being in reality a bold polemic put forth in his own defence.

So flimsy in plot, that dramatically it is the merest skit, *The Comic Theatre* nevertheless abounds in both atmosphere and characterization. A company of actors are discovered on their stage rehearsing a comedy. They are interrupted by a playwright who tries to dispose of his antiquated wares to a canny manager, and failing in his purpose, decides that rather than starve he will become an actor himself. An opera singer out of employment appears, seeking an engagement to sing intermezzo, and she too descends to histrionism as a last resort. In *The Father, a Rival of his Son* (*Il Padre rivale del suo figlio*), the make-believe piece these actors are rehearsing, Goldoni presents a spirited little play within a play after the manner of *Hamlet*. The incidents of *The Comic Theatre* itself are too atten-

[14] Regarding the titles of these sixteen comedies some doubt obtains. All the existing facts may be found in Appendix A.

uated, however, to constitute more than a slender sketch; yet it pictures life behind the scenes so candidly and portrays stage folk so ruthlessly, that the wonder is that Medebac's players did not refuse to appear in this exposure of the egotism that distinguishes their calling. Here are shown all the vagabond types that compose a theatrical troupe;—the overbearing leading lady and her harassed manager, the pert soubrette, the vain *jeune premier*, and the coarse comedian hungering for laughs, each as clamorous for a "fat part" as any modern star; for as one of them says:

> . . . There are some actors who have the conceit to judge a comedy by their part. If it be short, they say that the comedy is poor. They would all like to play the leading rôle, since the actor rejoices and is glad when he hears laughter and handclapping.
>
> For if the public's hands clap hard,
> The actor 's worthy of regard.

While stripping his actors of their pretensions and exposing their artistic leanness to the public, Goldoni gives them considerable wise advice. "Don't you see that it is n't right to address the audience?" he makes the manager in this play say to a member of his company. "When he is alone on the stage, an actor should pretend that no one hears or sees him; for this habit of speaking to the audience is an intolerable fault that should not be permitted on any ground whatever." In the following speech from this skit Goldoni vies with Shakespeare in artistic sanity:

> See to it that you pronounce clearly the last syllables, so they

can be heard. Recite slowly, but not too slowly; and in strong passages speak louder, and accelerate your speech. . . . Guard especially against drawling and against declamation; speak naturally, as if you were talking: since comedy is an imitation of nature, everything that is done must be likely and probable. . . .

Written in order to prepare his public for the suppression of the mask actors' hackneyed tricks, *The Comic Theatre* was intended by Goldoni to be the prologue to his reform of Italian comedy. He did not know, as Professor De Gubernatis points out,[15] that in the oriental plays of Kâlidâsa actors and actresses were sometimes made to discuss a new play and predispose the public in its favour; yet he knew classical comedy, and perhaps Molière's *Versailles Impromptu* (*L'Impromptu de Versailles*) as well. Courageously discarding the monologue of Plautus and the single act of Molière, he wrote a plotless play that held the interest of his audience throughout three acts merely by pictures of stage life and the discussion of dramatic values—a feat impossible of attainment in the present day.

Though dramatically *The Comic Theatre* is but a gossamer, in biographical texture it is so durable that from its lines much insight into Goldoni's literary life is gained; for besides presenting its author's theories of writing and acting, it shows the difficulties that lay in his progress toward fame. For instance, when a hack writer in this play declares that he intends to

[15] *Carlo Goldoni, Corso di Lezioni fatte nell' Università di Roma nell' anno scolastico* 1910–1911.

write comedies as good as Goldoni's, the manager, speaking *ex cathedra,* says:

> Ah, my lad, you must first spend on the stage as many years as he has passed there, and then you may hope to be able to do something. Do you think he became a writer of comedies all at once? He did so little by little, and succeeded in being appreciated by the public only after long study, long practice, and a continuous and untiring observation of the stage, manners, and customs, as well as of the genius, of nations.

After successfully presenting *The Comic Theatre* to Venetian playgoers, Goldoni gained time for the completion of his titanic task by staging six comedies he had already produced in Mantua and Milan,[16] hastening the meanwhile to completion those needed to fulfil his boast. When all but one had been finished, he was at a loss for a subject, until strolling one day in the Piazza San Marco, he saw an Armenian fruit pedlar, who "sent him home happy," this man's appearance having suggested to him the plot of *Women's Tittle-Tattle* (*I Pettegolezzi delle donne*), the last of the famous sixteen comedies. Presented on Shrove Tuesday (Feb. 23, 1751), it brought this extraordinary season to an end. Goldoni's words shall describe its impressive première:

> On that day the throng was so great that the price of boxes was tripled and quadrupled, and the applause so tumultuous that the passers-by wondered if it resulted from pleasure or a general riot. I was seated tranquilly in my box, surrounded by friends, who were weeping with joy. A crowd of people sought me out,

[16] *Le Femmine puntigliose, La Bottega del caffè, Il Bugiardo, L'Adulatore, Il Poeta fanatico,* and *Pamela nubile.*

and, forcing me to leave, carried and dragged me in spite of myself to the Ridotto, where I was paraded from room to room and made to receive the compliments I would have liked to avoid, had I been able to do so. I was too tired to endure such a ceremony; moreover, not knowing whence came the enthusiasm of the moment, I was provoked to find this play placed above others I liked far better. But little by little, I discerned the real motive for this general acclamation. It was an ovation for the fulfilment of my pledge.

In a letter he wrote four days later to Count Arconati-Visconti, his Milanese patron, Goldoni says that the crowd at the theatre on that eventful evening was so great that three hundred people were turned away, and although he had the "consolation of being universally appreciated," he declared that he should "never again undertake a burden such as he believed had never before been successfully borne by any one." "My friends trembled," he adds, "lest I might not fulfil this momentous engagement, while my enemies got their whistles ready to blow."

Thus terminated a dramatic season that is perhaps the most remarkable in the history of the stage. Not only did Goldoni produce sixteen new plays at the Sant' Angelo during as many weeks, but he was writing the libretti of five comic operas performed that season at the San Cassiano and other theatres, and had, besides, orders for comedies from other cities. "I am glued to my desk day and night," he writes a friend, "and for twelve days I have not been to the play. I have two theatres on my shoulders, and orders, besides, for two comedies a year for Dresden and two for

Florence.[17] In spite of the abnormal amount of work he was doing, there were only two failures among his famous sixteen plays.[18] In literary quality, too, they are far from contemptible, three of their number[19] taking a high, though not a commanding, rank among their author's literary work. In style they vary greatly, among them being comedies of character, intrigue, adventure, manners, and sentiment. Moreover, Goldoni began about this time to write out the parts of the mask characters. "After the first and second year," he says,[20] "I did not leave them at liberty, but whenever I thought they ought to be introduced, I gave them written parts; for I had learned by experience that a mask thinks more of himself than of the comedy in hand, and if he can but get a laugh, he does n't bother to investigate whether or not the thing he says conforms to his part and its circumstances; thus, without being aware of it, often confusing the action, and ruining the comedy."

It will be seen that Goldoni's reform was thoroughly launched during this memorable season. In keeping his word to the Venetian public he had accomplished a task such as Alfieri alone has emulated in modern times;[21] but by placing the antiquated masks in fetters, he had freed Italian comedy from

[17] Letter to G. A. Arconati-Visconti, Oct. 22, 1751.

[18] *Il Giuocatore* and *La Donna volubile.*

[19] *Le Femmine puntigliose, La Bottega del caffè, La Dama prudente.*

[20] Preface to *La Famiglia dell' antiquario,* Pasquali edition.

[21] The fourteen tragedies which Alfieri finished during the two years of his sojourn in Rome, were not all conceived there, some of them being merely finished or retouched at that time. (1782–83).

the despotism of centuries. The public, moreover, had given him an ovation: Pantalone and his mates no longer tyrannized over the stage.

After this arduous season Goldoni suffered from neurasthenia, a malady to which writers are especially prone. "I had at the age of forty-three," he says, "much inventive and executive facility, but I was a man like any other. My close attention to work had upset my health; I fell ill, and paid the price of my folly." Although overcome with fatigue, he assures us that "vexation played no less a part in his condition," for he had, like many another playwright, quarrelled with his manager, a grasping and ungrateful man, it appears, who had not given him so much as "one obol" beyond his salary for the year, in spite of the fact that he had written sixteen comedies instead of eight stipulated for in the contract. "I received many compliments from Medebac," he says, "but no reward of any sort; I was angry, yet I held my tongue." "However," as he continues, "a man cannot live on glory"; therefore, he turned to the publication of his plays, only to find himself opposed in the enjoyment of "this last resource" by niggardly Medebac, who claimed that in buying stage rights, he had purchased literary rights as well. "Not wishing to be in litigation with people he saw daily," and "loving peace too much to sacrifice it to interest," he compromised the matter by accepting Medebac's permission to publish one volume of plays a year. "I understood his singular permission to mean," he says,

"that Medebac believed he had attached me to himself for life; but I only awaited the end of the fifth year to get rid of him."

Feeling, meanwhile, that a change of air and the distractions of travel would benefit his health, he and his wife went in April with Medebac's troupe to Turin, and while there he composed *Molière* (*Il Moliere*), a five-act comedy in verse. The capital of Piedmont he found a delightful city, its inhabitants being thoroughly congenial and cosmopolitan, and he notes with considerable surprise that they spoke of him as an Italian instead of a Venetian, an indication that the seeds of nationalism were already planted in the field in which they eventually ripened to glorious maturity.

Leaving Turin before *Molière* was produced, he and "good Nicoletta" went to Genoa, where he led "a delectable life of perfect idleness." Refreshed by a summer of complete rest, he returned to Venice when the autumn chill was in the air, and there he found the first volume of his plays already printed and his royalties awaiting him. Having dedicated the four comedies it contained to four patrons, he acquired by virtue of this divided compliment a silver chocolate service, a watch, a golden box, and four pairs of lace cuffs, a more substantial reward, certainly, than the four ceremonious letters of thanks a modern writer would receive under similar circumstances. Further to gladden him, his comedy, *Molière,* which had been produced in Turin while he

was reposing in Genoa, was successfully presented in Venice.

During the ensuing dramatic season (1751-52), he penned his quota of comedies, a considerable portion of which proved successful; but the tranquillity of his life was disturbed by a soubrette, who unluckily was the aunt of Madame Medebac, the leading lady. Known on the stage as La Corallina, and married to Marliani, the brighella, this lady, Maddalena Raffi by name, had been separated from her husband for three years because of her "youthful flightiness," and when she rejoined him to become the soubrette of Medebac's company, she became a thorn in its side as well. She was "pretty and pleasant," Goldoni confesses, and "had a marked talent for comedy." As she played soubrette parts, of course he could not fail "to interest himself in her," he says; therefore "he took her under his wing," and wrote for her several comedies[22] wherein she shone so brilliantly that Madame Medebac, seeing in her aunt a rival for the public's favour, became so jealous that Goldoni was reluctantly obliged to display in another piece[23] the endowments of the niece. In the meantime, Collalto, the new pantaloon, was clamouring for the centre of the stage, and had to be placated, too, with a play;[24] therefore, it was an altogether vexatious season, the ill-feeling of which Goldoni

[22] *La Castalda, L'Amante militare, Le Donne gelose, La Serva amorosa, I Puntigli domestici, La Locandiera, Le Donne curiose.*

[23] *La Moglie saggia.*

[24] *I Due pantaloni*; later called *I Mercanti.*

subtly contrived to intensify by writing for his newest flame the stellar rôle of a play with the singularly appropriate title of *The Jealous Women* (*Le Donne gelose*). In this piece La Corallina closed the season so dazzlingly, the enamoured dramatist says, that "Madame Medebac, poor woman, again fell into convulsions." "Her vapours aroused my own," he continues, "with this difference, that she was ill in mind and I in body."

Still feeling the baneful effects of his abnormal labour of the preceding year, he joined Medebac's troupe at Bologna, hopeful that a change of air would benefit his weary nerves. While seated in a coffee-house one day, he overheard a group of Bolognese discussing his arrival. One of them acclaimed him "the author of fine comedies," another denounced him as "the author who had suppressed the masks and ruined comedy." In the midst of this heated discussion of his merits, a physician who knew him entered the coffee-house and greeted him warmly, much to the chagrin of his detractor and to the delight of his defender. This little scene amused Goldoni greatly, and after being introduced to the worthy Bolognese who had expressed a good opinion of him, he went, together with his friend, the doctor, and his new acquaintance, to the house of the Marquis Francesco Albergati-Capacelli, a Bolognese senator and patron of the stage, who played so considerable a part in his life that a word concerning him cannot be amiss.

Albergati was a rich young nobleman, who employed both his leisure and his fortune in the cultivation of the dramatic art. At Zola, one of his estates near Bologna, he built a theatre in emulation of *"le vieux Suisse des Délices,"* where he and his friends played translations of Voltaire, as well as comedies he penned himself, Albergati being so good a histrion that Goldoni declared no professional or amateur in Italy could play the heroes of tragedy or the lovers of comedy so well as this young Mæcenas of the stage, whom contemporaries dubbed "the Italian Garrick."

"Monsieur d'Albergati always showed me both kindness and friendship," Goldoni says, "and whenever I went to Bologna I lodged at his house." Moreover, it was Albergati who first revealed his work to Voltaire. The Bolognese had not met the sage of Ferney, but needing some information regarding the staging of *Sémiramis,* he wrote to Voltaire himself, and received together with the stage directions he sought, this approval of his passion for the theatre:

> Blessed be Heaven which inspired you with a love for the most divine pastime that cultivated men and virtuous women can enjoy, when more than two of them are gathered together.

The correspondence thus begun, continued, Voltaire and Albergati exchanging, together with expressions of mutual esteem, tragedies and comedies, both original and translated, as well as occasional gifts.

"I do not know Albergati," the Sage of Ferney told Casanova, when the latter visited him in 1760, "but he has sent me Goldoni's plays, some Bologna sausages, and a translation of my *Tancrède*."[25] The adventurer pronounced Goldoni the Molière of Italy, but dismissed Albergati as "a worthy gentleman with an income of six thousand sequins, who was afflicted with theatromania." From this fell disease he certainly suffered, for besides acting and writing plays, and playing host to playwrights and Thespians, he took for his wife an actress, whom he later murdered in a fit of jealousy. In expiation of his crime he was obliged to flee the country for a while, yet his fervour for the footlights remained unquenched, since at the age of seventy he married for his third wife a ballet dancer, who "made him the most unhappy of men."

In 1752, however, Albergati was but twenty-four years old, with the bacillus of theatromania just beginning to stir within him; so he welcomed Goldoni at his board, and extended to him the hand of friendship, a hospitality the dramatist requited by dedicating his next play to this young marquis.[26]

But our dramatist was beginning to cross fashionable thresholds in his native Venice, as well as in Bologna and Milan. Not only did he dine with the distinguished humanist and archæologist Gian Rinaldo Carli-Rubbi at the table of Her Excellency, La Signora Procuratessa Sagredo,[27] but he was actually "taken up" by the most exclusive patricians; for when

[25] *Mémoirs de J. Casanova de Seingalt.*

[26] *La Serva amorosa.* [27] Letter to Carli-Rubbi, Feb. 12, 1752.

Giovanni Mocenigo, a scion of a family of which six members had already worn the doge's cap, married in April, 1752, Caterina Loredan, daughter of the reigning Doge, the bridegroom invited Goldoni to the wedding in this friendly manner:

> The Most Serene Doge has permitted me to invite some of my friends to the wedding; you are one of the number; I beg you to come. There will be a seat for you at the table.

This Giovanni Mocenigo was a worthy member of a notable family whose name had been inscribed in the Golden Book of Venice since its inception and whose descendants of the present day are as gracious and hospitable as he. That he kept his word courteously, Goldoni's account of the wedding supper bears witness:

> In the banquet hall there was a table laid with a hundred covers, and in another room, one of twenty-four, at which the Doge's nephew did the honours. I was seated at the latter, but during the second course we all left our places and went into the large banquet hall, walking around this immense room, stopping now behind one and now behind another, I in particular enjoying the civilities with which an author, who had had the good luck to please, was showered.

This courtesy Goldoni repaid by dedicating one of his merry plays for music [28] to the bride "in testimony of his profound homage." He had been given a place at last at the feet of the mighty and it is amusing to picture him arriving at the palazzo of some Mocenigo or Querini. In a dingy public gondola

[28] *I Portentosi effetti della madre natura.*

he comes, which is kept rocking against the striped *pali,* while some trim private craft discharges its scented and powdered freight. The gorgeous door porter and the liveried gondoliers of his host with boat-hook in hand look at him askance as he pays the tariff of his shabby boatman, and begrudgingly help him to alight on the wave-washed steps. When he has ascended the broad marble stairway and entered the rococo salon on the floor above, adorned with frescoes from Tiepolo's magic brush, many a pair of pretty eyes flashes scornfully in the candlelight, and many a smile is hidden behind a *point de Venise* fan; for who is this round-faced *borghese* of awkward step but Papa Goldoni, the author of comedies, invited as a nine days' wonder by the hostess, before whom he is bowing and scraping with middle-class uneasiness.

VII

PLAYWRIGHT OF THE SAN LUCA THEATRE

WHEN Goldoni returned to Venice from Bologna during the autumn of 1752, there was a matter of greater import than social recognition to demand his attention. He had become dissatisfied with Medebac, and as the period during which he had contracted to serve him was drawing to a close, he notified this manager that "he need not count on him for the following year." Though Medebac "did his best to induce him to remain in his service," Goldoni entered into negotiations with the proprietors of the San Luca theatre, two patrician brothers, Antonio and Francesco Vendramin, who conducted their playhouse on a profit-sharing basis, the box subscriptions being retained for the rent and the door receipts divided among the actors according to merit and seniority.

A few days before his agreement with Medebac expired, Goldoni signed a contract with the Vendramins, whereby for a monthly salary of fifty ducats he agreed to write eight comedies annually during a period of ten years. Only during the first two years, however, was he obliged to follow the company on its summer tour at his own expense; and he

was at liberty to print his comedies, though not until three years after they had appeared on the Venetian stage.[1] While the theatres were closed for the Christmas holidays, he notified Medebac of his intended desertion, but he served him faithfully during the remaining months of the theatrical season. Moreover, at its close he handed him three new comedies, a parting gift that brought the total of those penned by him during the five years of his engagement with the Sant' Angelo company to forty-six—including *Il Pantalone imprudente* (1749) and *Il Sensale di matrimoni* (before April, 1753), of which only the titles exist—or six more than the eight a year he had contracted to write.

During the last season at the Sant' Angelo, Goldoni staged *The Mistress of the Inn* (*La Locandiera*), and was assured that "he had never constructed so well, nor written so naturally," an evidence, surely, that a good play is good at any time. Without masks and *lazzi,* or any of the more transparent tricks of the Improvised Comedy, this notable play—a milestone in its author's career—still holds the boards in Italy and has been translated into a dozen languages. At the time of its production, however, it but served to fire the jealousy of Madame

[1] Dino Mantovani: *Carlo Goldoni e il Teatro di San Luca a Venezia,* gives the text of this contract. It was dated Feb. 15, 1752, old Venetian time, therefore 1753 according to the Gregorian calendar. It was executed by Antonio Vendramin, whose brother Francesco signed two succeeding contracts with Goldoni after Antonio's death, which occurred previous to 1756, when Goldoni, in the dedication of *Il Geloso avaro,* speaks of him as being deceased. Francesco's correspondence with Goldoni is published in Signor Mantovani's volume.

Medebac, who on being informed that her aunt, La Corallina, was to play the title-rôle, took to her bed, until the news of her rival's success caused her to leave it hurriedly and force her husband to revive a former success,[2] in which her own talents might shine again. According to Goldoni:

> Her vapours became more annoying and more ridiculous. She laughed and cried at the same time; she screamed, grimaced, and contorted. Believing she was bewitched, her worthy family summoned exorcists; she was loaded down with relics, and she played and sported with these sacred tokens like a child of four.

Mere jealousy of a rival's histrionic success in rôles quite different from her own, appears an insufficient cause for Madame Medebac's hysteria, unless to it be added jealousy of the heart. May not the manager's wife have loved Goldoni with an unrequited passion, intensified by hate of the winsome soubrette who had made him the prey of her charms? Though he is silent on this point, the last comedy he wrote for the Sant' Angelo was "a little shaft of revenge," [3] directed at the latter of these warring ladies, whose efforts to keep him under her thumb had proved so futile that "she vowed eternal hatred." Though he paid La Corallina the compliment of composing for her the comedy that ended his contract with Medebac, she refused to play in it. He was glad, nevertheless, he assures us, "to reply to the vehemence of her anger with a gentle and suitable pleasantry."

Amidst this storm of feminine rancour he left the

[2] *Pamela nubile.* [3] *La Donna vendicativa.*

Sant' Angelo theatre in the spring of 1753, and took service at the San Luca, only to kindle a jealous conflagration there. In the new company there was a leading lady aged fifty, whose husband, Pietro Gandini, was the brighella. Though so notable a protean artist that he might be justly dubbed the Frugoli of his day, this actor claims immortality through his husbandhood; for no sooner did the new playwright appear at the San Luca theatre than Gandini began uxorious intrigues to ensure the best rôles for his wife. "A charming Florentine" having been engaged to play the second rôles, Goldoni "ran the risk," he says, "of being forced to give the heavy parts to the young, and the sentimental to the superannuated woman," Gandini having assured him that he expected his wife "to shine on the stage for ten years to come." The lady "realized her limitations," it appears; yet, when a ten years' engagement at her present salary was offered her, and rôles promised her by Goldoni "in which she would win applause, provided their choice was left to him," her husband maintained curtly that his wife was the leading-lady, and that he would rather be hanged than see her degraded, whereupon "he turned his back rather scurvily."

By creating so sympathetic a second part in a new play [4] that La Gandini was thoroughly eclipsed by the vivacious and passionate acting of Caterina Bresciani, the charming young Florentine in question,

[4] Hircana, in *La Sposa persiana.*

Goldoni, whose "diabolical art" had sacrificed the leading-lady without her husband having been able to perceive it, so enraged that worthy that he refused to let his wife appear in the next production. Being given but scant courtesy by the Vendramins, Gandini vented his anger by throwing his watch as a parting shaft of displeasure through a glass door, "which he broke within every meaning of the proverb," whereupon he and his ancient spouse resigned their places in the troupe and took service with the King of Poland. "Ah, what strange beasts actors are to drive," Molière once exclaimed, Goldoni's troubles with jealous histrions being but those shared by the members of his craft in every age and every land.

Although there were quarrelling actresses at the San Luca as well as at the Sant' Angelo, Goldoni's vexations were lessened by the fact that his new managers were gentlemen, who in their transactions with him showed themselves at once scrupulous and liberal. He had articled himself for ten years to write eight comedies annually at a monthly salary of fifty ducats, yet before the half of that period had expired, the number of comedies he was obliged to furnish was reduced to six. He was permitted, moreover, to write eight or, at most, nine a year; therefore, as his emolument was in his second contract with the Vendramins changed from a monthly stipend of fifty ducats to the payment of a hundred for each comedy he penned, it will be seen that for

the eight called for by the original contract, he would receive an increase of two hundred ducats over its terms. Besides, this second contract gave Goldoni a bonus of two hundred ducats, payable in two instalments, on condition that he comply strictly with its provisions.[5]

Yet the Vendramins, though generous, were patricians, who brooked no undue familiarity on the part of their bourgeois dramatist. In the letters he exchanged with Francesco Vendramin, Goldoni is careful to address him as *Eccellenza,* whereas the manager dismisses him as "Signor Carlo." Once, when he asked for a hundred ducats, Vendramin, though he sent the money, wrote curtly: "Signor Carlo, I am a gentleman and a Christian, two words of great significance. I who write them, understand them: I hope that you will understand them also after having read and digested them." [6]

Although his material condition was bettered at the San Luca theatre, Goldoni had considerable trouble in "infusing its actors with the taste, tone, and natural manner that had distinguished those of the Sant' Angelo"; moreover, the San Luca was a larger theatre, where the subtleties of comedy were lost. No sooner had he overcome these difficulties, so far as lay in his power, by penning plays more spectacular than those he had staged for Medebac, than he was beset by other troubles; for when he took to Bettinelli

[5] The second contract, dated Oct. 14, 1756, was executed by Francesco Vendramin, after the death of his brother Antonio.

[6] Letter, July, 1759.

the fourth volume of his plays,[7] to his amazement he was coldly informed by that publisher that he would accept the manuscript only from Medebac, on whose sole account the publication of the comedies would be continued. Furthermore, Medebac was pocketing a larger sum from the publication of the comedies than he had paid the author for writing them.[8]

Feeling that "chicanery is the same everywhere," and rather than enter into a lawsuit, Goldoni decided to issue his plays elsewhere; therefore, he went to Florence forthwith and arranged with the publishing house of Paperini to bring out a revised author's edition, the emendations and amplifications of which would "confound" Bettinelli and make the latter's edition worthless. But that wily rascal, aided by the publisher's guild, induced the Venetian authorities to forbid the importation of this foreign edition. Boldly aided by his friends, Goldoni resorted to smuggling. He had, he tells us, five hundred Venetian subscribers to the new edition, and each time a volume left the press, five hundred copies of it were hidden "on the banks of the Po, at a spot known to a band of noble Venetians," who introduced the contraband into the capital and distributed it within sight of everybody. The government held aloof, so he says, "from a matter that was more ridiculous than

[7] In his Memoirs Goldoni says the third volume, but he is in error. See A. G. Spinelli: *Bibliografia goldoniana.*

[8] *Carlo Goldoni ad un suo amico in Venezia,* published as a prospectus of the Paperini edition, 1753.

interesting." Nevertheless, the correpondence of a confidential agent of the Venetian censors at this time indicates that the charges against Bettinelli, made by Goldoni in a published letter, were so resented in Venice that efforts were threatened to prevent his return to that place in case he persisted in smuggling copies of the Florentine edition.[9]

Goldoni did return to Venice, however, without being proscribed; yet no sooner was he comfortably settled there than his worthless brother arrived, to pester him anew. He had not seen Gian Paolo for fully ten years, but when the scamp reached the end of his resources, he wrote the dramatist, saying he had married in Rome a lawyer's widow who had since died, and that he wished "to introduce to his brother the two Goldoni offspring" to whom she had given birth,—a boy of four, or thereabouts, named Antonio Francesco, and Petronilla Margherita, a girl of five. "Becoming interested immediately in these two children, who might," as he feared, "need his assistance," Goldoni sent his brother funds for the journey, embraced him fondly when he arrived in Venice, and adopted his progeny, whom he treated as his own, his wife being childless. His mother, who was nearly eighty by this time, was "much thrilled by seeing a son whom she had ceased to count among the living"; while Nicoletta, "whose goodness and sweetness never belied her, received the two children as her own and took charge of their education."

[9] P. G. Molmenti: *Carlo Goldoni.*

Still suffering, as he says, from the effects of the hard work he had done for Medebac, and being on the verge of a nervous collapse, Goldoni went "with his entire family" to Modena during the early summer of 1754, and there fell ill of pneumonia. No sooner had he recovered, than he must needs be off to Milan "to join his actors"; for even during his convalescence he wrote his daily stint of dramatic work. When he returned to Venice in the autumn, he lost his mother; though, strangely enough, he gives no account in his memoirs of the death of "one who had ever caressed him and never complained of him." Of the family reunion brought about by his brother's return, he records, however, that "surrounded by all that were dear to him, and content with his work, he was the happiest man in the world."

When these words were penned, thirty-odd years had slipped by and his memory had doubtless mellowed, since in letters he wrote but a few months before Gian Paolo appeared in Venice, he complains of being "pursued by misfortunes and persecuted by enemies." [10] Indeed, it is difficult to picture this childless sufferer from depleted nerves, whose brother had returned to harass him, and whose mother's life was ebbing, as the happiest of men, even though his plays sold well and "money came to him from all sides." Much nearer the truth it is to state that dur-

[10] Letter to Marina Sagredo Pisani, Nov. 4, 1753, and letter to the Marchese Bonifazio Rangoni, of the preceding day.

ing those laborious years in Venice, he led a life of constant effort, and that, since "money never abided with him long," his meagre salary barely sufficed for the necessities of life.

He served the Vendramins faithfully and brilliantly the meanwhile, nearly all the naturalistic comedies in the Venetian dialect, upon which his fame most surely rests, being written during the nine years he worked for their playhouse; yet he was harassed by the burden of an augmented family and, as a subsequent chapter will show, he was beset by the attacks of jealous rivals and militant critics, and often was at his wit's end to keep the public's fickle heart from wavering. When he entered the Ridotto, for instance, after the failure of a comedy,[11] he heard the loungers exclaim: "Goldoni is finished. Goldoni has emptied his bag, the portfolio is exhausted." Asking what portfolio was meant, a masker replied: "We mean the manuscript from which Goldoni has taken everything he has yet written." He had "sought critics," he declared, but found only "ignorance and animosity." Undaunted, however, by this charge of plagiarism and these sneers, he passed the night meditating how he might be avenged, and at daybreak began a five-act comedy in verse,[12] which was produced successfully just a fortnight later, the actors rehearsing it act by act as the writing proceeded. "Listen to me, fellow-workers,"

[11] *Il Vecchio bizzarro.* [12] *Il Festino.*

he exclaimed regarding this proof that his bag was not empty; "the only means we have of being avenged on the public is to force it to applaud us."

Since his contract did not oblige him to follow the troupe of the San Luca theatre to the mainland after the first two years of his engagement, he made fewer journeys now than he did when he was employed by Medebac; yet he passed a summer at Bologna and one at Parma. On his way to the former city he was arrested at a custom-house near Ferrara, because, as he says in his ingenuous way, he "forgot to submit his trunk for examination." Though it contained illegal chocolate, coffee, and candles, the customs officer who ransacked it found several volumes of comedies as well, and being an amateur actor, he was so pleased to meet their author, that instead of confiscating the contraband as the law required, he went to Ferrara and pleaded for clemency with his superiors with such success that the would-be smuggler was permitted to keep his luggage, after paying a nominal duty. The official refused a tip, moreover, and also a gift of chocolate; so, making a note of his name and promising to send him a copy of the next edition of his plays, Goldoni fared on contentedly to Bologna.

After passing some months in that city he returned to Venice for a few days, then sought recreation near Padua at the country-house of Count Lodovico Widiman, an amateur harlequin, infected, like Albergati, with theatromania. For performance in his host's

THE RIDOTTO

Palazzo Doria, Rome

theatre he wrote some dramatic sketches, and when forced by the ladies to act the lover in one of them, and getting laughed at for his pains, he penned a piece [14] in which he played four comic rôles so successfully that he considered his histrionic honour avenged.

Returning to Venice he passed the winter there, engaged in writing his covenanted batch of comedies, and in the spring (1756) he went to Parma at the command of its duke, the Infante Don Philip of Spain, to compose libretti for the use of the Italian comic opera company which His Royal Highness was then establishing. So successfully did he accomplish this task that he received the title of "Court Poet" and an annual pension of three thousand Parmesan lire, or about a hundred and fifty dollars, involving, as he says, "no obligation whatever," the plays Don Philip commanded being otherwise requited.[15] Francesco Vendramin, too, made a second and more favourable contract with him about this time; hence he found himself in easier circumstances than he had ever been since he began to write professionally for the stage.

Don Philip's court was passing the summer at Colorno, and there Goldoni saw for the first time in his life a troupe of French actors. Kissing was then forbidden on the Italian stage; so, when he perceived a stage lover embracing his mistress, he shouted "bravo" so lustily that the punctilious court was

[14] *La Fiera.* [15] Letter to G. A. Arconati-Visconti, Oct. 9, 1756.

shocked, till "the Italian author's surprise" received the ducal pardon. At Colorno, he learned to speak French and there he kissed the hands of so many ladies, royal and otherwise, and made so many agreeable acquaintances, that he was loath to leave the court. Returning to Venice for the autumn theatrical season, he revisited Parma during the winter and worked diligently upon three merry musical plays for his royal patron's opera troupe.[16]

When he returned to Venice in the spring of 1757, he found that his enemies had spread abroad the news of his death, a certain monk having even "dared to aver that he had been at his funeral." As Goldoni reappeared not only "safe and sound," but also with a ducal appointment and pension, it is not surprising that "the anger and envy of his rivals were excited." Indeed, their attacks upon him grew so bitter that winter (1756-57), that his literary friends rallied to his colours and defended him in pamphlet and pasquinade.

Apparently the greatest pleasure of the two dramatic seasons preceding and following his trips to Parma, was the acquaintance he formed with Madame du Boccage, a poetess "as lovable as she was wise," whom he styled "the Parisian Sappho." No doubt "the agreeable and instructive conversation" of this *femme savante,* upon whose brow Voltaire had already placed a laurel crown, atoned to Goldoni in some degree for the rancour of his enemies;

[16] *La Buona figliuola, Il Festino, I Viaggiatori ridicoli.*

yet he was harassed by overwork as well as by malice.

During the first of these seasons (1756-57) he presented seven new comedies, "his Venetian theatrical affairs being particularly fortunate that year." [18] He found time as well to write for the private stage of his friend, the Marquis Albergati. During the season of 1757-58 he was asked by a nephew of the reigning Pope, who dabbled in theatrical ventures, to visit Rome and write comedies for the Tordinona theatre, and never having been in the Eternal City, he accepted the invitation, avidly glad, no doubt, of the chance to escape from the rivals and others who were hectoring him. Promising to furnish the San Luca theatre with novelties during his absence, he set out in the autumn, he and his good wife arriving at Rome in December, after experiencing no mishap more serious than that of being choused at Loretto by a vender of holy images.

The dilettante who had engaged Goldoni invited him to dine at his palace and meet the actors of the Tordinona theatre, a troupe, as he discovered, of Neapolitan masks, entirely without experience in written comedy. Moreover, in accordance with Roman custom, they were all men, even the soubrette being of the masculine persuasion. When he saw this motley crew, Goldoni's countenance fell at the thought that his Venetian comedies were to be interpreted by Pulcinella in the Neapolitan dialect. He had brought with him for his Roman début a

[18] Letter to G. A. Arconati-Visconti, Dec. 14, 1756.

comedy,[19] and while these gawky buffoons, who had never acted written rôles, were manfully struggling to master their lines, he sought distraction from his worries in the sights and gaieties of Rome.

Being introduced to several persons of quality through the letters he had had the foresight to bring with him from Venice, the doors of Roman society were rapidly opened to him. A cardinal placed a carriage at his disposal; another obtained for him an audience with the Pope. After conversing for nearly an hour with His Holiness about his nephews and nieces, he forgot to kiss his toe when retiring, whereupon the pontiff hemmed and hawed so persistently, that he recovered from his absence of mind sufficiently to undo his blunder and receive the benediction. Every day he saw cardinals, princes, princesses, and foreign ministers, he tells us, and was all but impoverished by the tips he was obliged, in accordance with the Roman usage, to give their valets. He visited St. Peter's, which beggared his description, and he did not fail to examine the other precious monuments of the Holy City. Meanwhile he lodged happily in the Via Condotti, near the Corso, with a married abate, Pietro Poloni by name, the title of abate being at that time only a generic or complimentary one.

Though Poloni "would not have failed for all the gold in the world" to pray every day in St. Peter's, he was fond of pleasure and good cheer. There was

[19] *La Vedova spiritosa.*

always a special dish on the table at dinner, cooked by his own hands for "his lodger," who "could not vex him more than by dining out." Indeed, on one occasion when Goldoni absented himself, the worthy abate waxed so warm that he threw a stew-pan and its savoury viand out of the window, vowing that nobody should eat it if not the dramatist. Poloni's pride was so flattered by having a notable man beneath his roof that when maskers were showering the occupants of carriages with confetti at carnival time, and riderless Barbary steeds were raced through the Corso near by, he hung a sign on his balcony, saying it was reserved for the advocate Goldoni. He invited so many of his friends to his house, however, that his illustrious lodger was all but crowded off the balcony reserved for him, his guests being so loath to leave the latter's distinguished presence that when the day's sport was ended, Poloni was forced to send for violins and turn the rout into a ball, "the night being spent brilliantly and everybody going away happy."

Yet long before such glory was bestowed upon him by his fawning host, Goldoni was humiliated by the actors of the Tordinona theatre. A barber's boy and a carpenter's apprentice were cast for the female parts in the comedy he had selected for his début; and at rehearsal the declamation of the entire company was "so extravagant and absurd" that he protested vigorously against "the utter lack of truth and intelligence" displayed by this troupe of Bottoms and

Quinces. "Every one has his way, sir," said the Pulcinella tartly, "and this is ours." In order that there might be less of it to jar his hearing, the despairing dramatist cut the play a good third, and tiresome as was the task, he attended every rehearsal.

The Tordinona theatre, he discovered, was "the resort of navvies and sailors," and on the opening night he sat in a box, looking down upon a mere baker's dozen of them; for when it was noised abroad that Pulcinella would not appear, these lovers of improvised comedy stayed away from their favourite haunt. "The curtain rose; the Neapolitan actors played as disastrously as they had rehearsed; the meagre audience shouted lustily for their beloved Pulcinella; the play went from bad to worse." In despair Goldoni fled to the opera, where his good wife, foreseeing the failure of his comedy, had preceded him in company with the daughter of their Roman host. There he found the singers incurring the anger of the pit, a balm to his own chagrin he thus describes:

> I entered the box, and though I said not a word, they saw grief written in my face. "Console yourself," said the young woman laughingly; "things are not going any better here; the music is not at all pleasing: not an air, not a recitative, not a ritornello that is making a hit. Buranello is extraordinarily far from being himself." She was a musician, she could judge, and you could see that everybody was of her opinion.
>
> The Roman parterre is terrible: the *abati* sit in judgment both vigorously and noisily; there are no guards, no police; cat-calls, shouts, laughter, invectives, resound from all parts of the house.

. . . What would have become of me, if I had stayed at the Tordinona until the end of my play? I tremble to think of it.

Abandoning all hope of shaping his gawky Neapolitans into adept comedians, he decided on the morrow to introduce musical interludes between the acts of the improvised comedies they were accustomed to play; and finding in the shops of Rome the best of his merry plays for music on sale, he revived some of them so successfully, that his dilettante manager was spared a heavy financial loss. For his failure at the Tordinona Goldoni found solace at the Capranica theatre where, it appears, his published comedies had been played successfully during several seasons, *Pamela Unmarried* (*Pamela nubile*) being upon its boards at the time of his visit to Rome. Delighted with the acting of the Capranica comedians in this piece, he wrote a sequel for their use which he called *Pamela Married* (*Pamela maritata*), but he left Rome before it was produced and was, therefore, spared the mortification of its failure.

He had intended to visit Naples before returning to his native city, he says in his memoirs, and adds that he wrote the Parmesan minister in Venice asking him for Neapolitan introductions. As he received no answer from this diplomat, he interpreted his silence as an expression of the ill feeling existing between the courts of Parma and Naples and decided, therefore, to abandon his journey, although assured, so he states, of an opportunity to visit Naples "without it costing him an obol." As the tone of the letters Fran-

cesco Vendramin wrote him at this time[20] indicates dissatisfaction, it seems more likely that he abandoned his trip to Naples through fear of managerial displeasure.

Vendramin, it appears, was vexed with him not only because of the ill success of some comedies he had written before his departure for Rome, notably *The Intrepid Woman* (*La Donna forte*) which could not pass the censor, but also because of his attempt to introduce his copyist into the ranks of the San Luca company in the humble post of *terzo amoroso,* or third juvenile. This protégé was "not a kinsman," Goldoni is careful to point out, "but he had agreed to assist him, and as a Christian and a gentleman, he was obligated," he says, "to give the young man bread." Vendramin, however, had heard unfavourable accounts from Rome regarding the aspiring copyist and "did not see what his playwright's obligations had to do with his own theatre"; therefore he demurred at engaging him.[21] Goldoni did not like his manager's attitude in this matter, nor the indifference of the Venetian public toward his most recent comedies. In a letter written to Vendramin at this time,[22] after taking occasion to say that not only one, but two Roman theatres stood ready to produce his works, he thus unburdens his heart regarding his reluctance to return to Venice:

[20] Dino Mantovani: op. cit.

[21] It is interesting to note that this young man, Giovanni Simone by name, eventually became a successful comedian; thereby proving that Goldoni's confidence was not misplaced. See L. Rasi: op. cit.

[22] Rome, March 17, 1759.

My hesitation does not arise from fickleness, calculation, ill will, nor even from a desire for revenge, and much less from an inadequate realization of my obligations toward Your Excellency, the company, and the Venetian public, all of whom I esteem, love, and respect; but rather from being morally convinced that Your Excellency would easily be persuaded to release me from my engagement. This conviction is based upon the poor success of my comedies during the past year; upon the restlessness and gossip of the actors, and (if you will permit me to say so) upon the readiness with which Your Excellency has continually mortified me in the matter of my recommendation of my young protégé. All this causes me to believe that I might be quietly left in peace for a year at least, and the absence of a year does not disturb our agreement for ten successive years, should the two parties come to an understanding on this point.

But Vendramin did not view favourably a prolonging of his playwright's absence; therefore Goldoni parted from his solicitous host, Poloni, in the middle of a noxious Roman summer, and retreating from the field of his artistic defeat, he retired to Bologna, where he remained more than two months preparing material for the Venetian theatrical season, and importuning Vendramin by letter to pay for the comedies he was sending him. First, while still in Rome, he asks for the bonus of a hundred ducats Vendramin had agreed to pay him semi-annually as long as his work was satisfactory,—a sum the manager sends reluctantly; then, from Bologna, he asks for a hundred and fifty more on account of two plays finished and forwarded to Venice, the matter of money having become truly "the important point," he says, for he has had to borrow six sequins, and moreover, he must

settle the debts his brother has contracted at Modena. In truth, his letters to Vendramin at this time show distrust and weariness. He is convinced the manager is annoyed with him, and he begs once more for the release he will be constrained to take himself after the year is ended. He will not ask again for money, he continues, which is not forthcoming, since God will provide for him. "When I do not write, I am criticized," he laments, "and when I do I am tormented. Be charitable with me," he implores Vendramin, "and display that sympathy you were wont to show in our conversations." [23]

Although depressed by failure and by debt, and apparently distrustful of his own genius, Goldoni strove diligently to retrieve his fortunes by means of an elaborate theatrical scheme he presented to Vendramin at the same time that he was quarrelling about the funds he believed to be his due. He planned to write nine plays, each symbolic of a muse, "and varying," as he says, "in metre and conception," the series to be introduced by a versified prologue,[24] in which Apollo and the Muses were to appear and, as in the case of *The Comic Theatre,* describe the author's plan to the Venetian public. But Vendramin, perhaps from a desire to keep Goldoni within bounds, was loath to approve of the scheme in its entirety. For fully two months letters were passing between Venice and Bologna, Goldoni enthusiastically upholding his plan as "something at once extraordinary

[23] Dino Mantovani: op. cit. [24] *Il Monte parnasso.*

and practical," and Vendramin opposing it at first, then acquiescing, albeit reluctantly. Meanwhile, the dramatist was clamouring for money, but not until Vendramin informed him that the final ducats he demanded must be collected by him in person, did he show a willingness to start for his native city.

In his memoirs he says that in returning from Rome to Venice he passed through Tuscany, where he revisited Pisa, Leghorn, and Lucca, and "began to bid adieu to Italy without knowing that he was soon to leave it for ever." As he did not depart from Rome until the first days of July, and had reached Bologna by the seventeenth of that month, his trip through Tuscany, if made on the way to the latter city, was hurried indeed. As he remained in Bologna, according to his own letters, two months and a half, and had reached Venice prior to October 13th,[25] it seems unlikely that he went two hundred miles or more out of his way at a moment when Vendramin was urging him to hasten back for the opening of the theatrical season. However this may be, he had reached Venice in the beginning of October, 1759, after an absence of nearly a year, and there resumed actively his post as poet of the San Luca theatre.

During his absence he had sent the Vendramins several plays, the last being a comedy[26] inspired by the lovers' quarrels he had witnessed in the family

[25] Goldoni's letter of this date in Masi's *Lettere di Carlo Goldoni*, and the correspondence between Francesco Vendramin and Goldoni from June 23 to Sept. 11, 1759, in Mantovani's collection.

[26] *Gli Innamorati.*

of his Roman host. The most notable event, however, of the season following his return from Rome was the presentation toward its close of *The Boors* (*I Rusteghi*), a comedy in which his naturalistic genius stands forth pre-eminent; while during the following winter he produced *The New House* (*La Casa nova*) and *The Chioggian Brawls* (*Le Baruffe Chiozzotte*), two other plays in dialect that vie with *The Boors* in naturalistic mastery.[27] Thus gloriously was Roman defeat retrieved by Venetian victory.

When the second season subsequent to his return had been brought to a successful finish, Goldoni was able to announce triumphantly at a Lenten supper of his friends the forthcoming publication of a new subscription edition of his plays.[28] As the guests had "eaten every fish from the Adriatic to the Lake of Garda," and "the wine and other liquors had cheered them," the moment was auspicious for the launching of a literary venture; so, when paper and pens were brought, each of the eighteen gentlemen present subscribed for ten copies, the author—to quote his own words—"catching by one cast of his net a hundred and eighty subscriptions." Yet, in spite of the liberality of his friends and the success of his masterly comedies, he was growing weary of struggling ingloriously with inferior craftsmen for the public's favour; therefore, when he received from Paris the offer of a two years' engagement with *Les Comédiens*

[27] In his memoirs Goldoni places the production of *I Rusteghi* in 1757, but it took place in 1760. See Appendix A.

[28] The Pasquali edition, 1761.

du roi de la troupe italienne, he turned a willing ear.

But before the story of his long and futile battle with rivals and critics is told, together with his touching farewell to his native land, a détour must be made into the dramatic field where he laboured so diligently during the fourteen years of his service with Medebac and the Vendramins. He wrote during those years, it will be recalled, approximately a hundred comedies, several tragedies and tragi-comedies, and over fifty merry plays for music, in all a prodigious literary output. The most brilliant, as well as the most prolific period of his career, it was graced, as has already been pointed out, by all his masterpieces except one. Of the comedies written during these fecund years, about seventy are in prose. As the most ambitious of the thirty-odd pieces in verse written at this time were inspired by literary quarrels still to be narrated, the account of these versified comedies, as well as the story of the bickerings that inspired a few of them, will be deferred until the prose comedies of this glorious period shall have been examined. These, it will be remembered, are not grouped structurally in the present work, but in accordance with their social aspects, the four chapters that follow being devoted to their exposition.

VIII

COMEDIES OF THE ARISTOCRACY

VENICE, "the Sybaris of Europe," as Ugo Foscolo, the poet and man of letters, called her, was in Goldoni's day an enchanting haunt for the idle and the dissipated. "Free and happy abode of pleasure and beauty," said Algarotti, the Venetian friend of William Pitt, an opinion concurred in by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and many another globe trotter of that time. Into the councils of Europe Venice no longer entered with her proud head erect. Her diplomacy was all cringing courtesy, her attitude that of an armed—nay, rather an unarmed—neutrality; for her strength had waned, and the rôle she played was that of Pantalone in his slippered dotage—a weak though crafty old republic, ever distrustful of those about her.

Cutting this sorry figure abroad, she was so senilely indulgent at home that her children did as they pleased provided they did not meddle with politics or religion. Indeed, she was perpetually *en fête,* "a lightsome, wanton city of masquerades, serenades, travesties and amusements, whence golden-oared barks departed for Cythera by paper lantern light." [1]

[1] Philippe Monnier: op. cit.

With two hundred cafés that never closed their doors; with five times as many theatres as the Parisians then enjoyed; with a Ridotto, or municipal gaming-house, where both men and women punted at faro; with *casini,* or gambling clubs; and countless resorts of an even more questionable character, the inhabitants of Venice did not lack the means of turning night into day. Indeed, in the words of a Venetian commentator, "There were no nights in Venice; there shone eternal day." [2] Except for a small and morose minority of austere merchants to whom the traditions of the past still clung, the population of this pleasure-loving city was a festival population living in the streets or on the moonlit canals—a people seeking pleasure or catering to pleasure, for, in the eighteenth century, Venice vied so successfully with Paris as the pleasure house of Europe that "the Carnival of Venice" spelled languorous, insidious delight.

And what a carnival it was, of time, as well as of blithesome pleasure! While its merry king reigned, all Venice, from the patrician to the humblest drone, went masked. In the streets, the drawing-rooms, the theatres, convents, palaces, or gaming-houses, all were equal if shielded by a mystic strip of white satin. There was but one personality to be respected—*Sior Maschera.* To quote that consummate rogue, Casanova: "The nobility mingled with the people, the

[2] Luigi Orteschi: *Sulle passioni, i costumi e il modo di vivere de' Veneziani.*

prince with his subjects, the uncommon with the common, the beautiful with the hideous, there being no longer either magistrates or laws in force." [3]

A little mass for the morning, a little game of cards for the afternoon, and a little sweetheart for the evening (*massetta, bassetta, e donnetta*) was the formula of Venetian life. A winter of carnival with Folly continuously shaking her bells, a summer of idle pleasure on the banks of the Brenta, was the Venetian nobleman's calendar—an unbridled year of gaiety; for even in Lent, though the theatres were closed, the door of the gaming-house stood open and that of the little sweetheart's boudoir would open to a gentle knock.

"The Sybaris of Europe!" Foscolo knew well the frailty of a city wealthy like that Lucanian town to which he compared her, and, like her, enervated by luxury. Goldoni knew, too, that his native Venice was morally corrupt, and, in his kindly way, he preached many a true sermon on the social depravity of his day. In a score or more of his comedies, Venetian society is shown, idle, luxurious, incontinent, and prodigal; but, though he paints the vices of his native Venice, he points helpful, optimistic morals too, and not once does he admit that society is hopelessly rotten or incapable of betterment. His plays of this nature are no longer harlequinades, but genuine comedies of manners, in which the society of an age is pictured in vivid colours by the sprightly brush strokes of a

[3] *Confutazione della storia del governo veneto, d'Amelot de la Houssaye.*

genial painter, familiar from birth with the scenes and people he portrayed.

The spirit of carnival permeates *The Artful Widow* (*La Vedova scaltra*), a comedy written during Goldoni's first season as the playwright of the Sant' Angelo Theatre, and the first of his plays that may be justly called a comedy of manners. Here is pictured the pleasure-loving cosmopolitanism of Venice after her glory had departed—Venice, the playground of Europe at carnival time; here only a suggestion of the Improvised Comedy remains, Pantalone and Il Dottore, except for the former's Venetian speech, being no longer masks but the conventional old men of the modern stage—the one, an elderly suitor; the other, the father of marriageable daughters. To be sure, the deliciously funny *lazzi* of Arlecchino hold the play together; but these *lazzi,* besides being written, are necessary to the unfolding of the story, and this particular Arlecchino—a doltish waiter at a coffee-house, who is ever bobbing up in a way so muddy-brained that the plot is thickened thereby—is so delightful a characterization that he may be called the apotheosis of Arlecchino.

The story concerns an attractive widow, for whose hand a stolid Briton, a proud Spaniard, a light-hearted Frenchman, and an ardent Italian, vie. The Briton sends her a jewel; the Frenchman, a portrait of himself; the Spaniard, his family tree; the Italian, naught but words of fervent love. These gifts, Arlecchino, the bearer, so confuses that Rosaura, the

winsome protagonist, is for a time at a loss to understand from whom each present comes. Rosaura is artful, as the name of the play implies, yet possessed of good common sense. Though anxious to remarry in order to be free from bonds imposed by her father and her brother-in-law, she is resolved not to choose a husband from among the international quartette of lovers pursuing her until she is satisfied that her second husband will prove more satisfactory than the first, her lord and master on that occasion having been a doddering rich man. Her quandary, and the sagacity with which she views it, are best told in her own words:

> Here am I with four lovers, each of whom has his merits and his eccentricities. The Italian is faithful, yet too jealous; the Englishman, ingenuous but fickle; the Frenchman, gallant but too affected; the Spaniard, passionate but too sombre. Wishing to be free from family subjection, I see that I must choose one of them, but which I cannot yet discern. I fear, however, that I should prefer the Italian count to all the others, although he sometimes annoys me with his jealous suspicions. He was the first to declare himself, and, moreover, he has the advantage over the others of being a fellow-countryman—a decided advantage in every land on earth.

In order to satisfy herself regarding their fidelity, she goes forth in mask and domino at carnival time to flirt with her admirers one by one, while feigning to be the countrywoman of each. Having wrung a token of love from all except the Italian, together with the promise of a rendezvous, she scorns British wealth, French conceit, and Spanish pride for true

Italian love, the fickleness of her foreign admirers being unmasked by a disclosure of the souvenirs each has given her while believing her to be a charming compatriot on amorous adventure bent. Her hand being awarded the faithful, though jealous, Italian, this spirited picture of patrician Venice at carnival time comes to a happy conclusion.

Indeed, this play is a patriotic comedy, in which Venetian upper-class society is depicted gallantly by a loving son of Venice. The licence of the Carnival is used, however, as a dainty pink fan to hide an artful widow's efforts to discern which of four admirers loves her most, instead of as a scarlet cloak for the libertinage that made the Venice of that day the Mecca of pleasure-loving foreigners. Not only does patriotism inspire Goldoni's scenes, but a modernness as well, far in advance of the times, as when Rosaura exclaims, "Those laws that dispose of women's hearts at the cost of their undoing are, alas! too barbarous." In truth, this charming comedy was a bold step forward, for here Italy had a worthy written comedy of its own, with both atmosphere and characterization; its patriotic spirit being thus expressed by the artful widow herself:

> I pride myself on being of a land where good taste reigns as much as anywhere else in the world. Italy to-day frames the rules for good manners: she represents what is best in all countries, leaving to them what is undesirable; a fact that makes her wonderful, and enamours the people of all lands with a sojourn on her shores.

Yet in spite of this patriotic utterance, light-

hearted Venice was living then, for the joy of living it, a careless life of idleness and gratification. Her streets, her cafés and her gaming-houses were thronged with merrymakers in carnival garb; trouble-makers, too, since, under the graceful folds of the carnival domino, ardent hands were often clasped while a rendezvous was being whispered by rouged lips hidden beneath the carnival mask. Away from the crowded Piazza, away from the Ridotto where gamblers with flushed faces punted at faro, many a gondola sped swiftly, the moonlit water of the canal lapping its long, black prow. While dripping oars creaked and nimble gondoliers sang plaintively to the rhythm of their sweeping strokes, many a pair of lovers caressed beneath a dark canopy. At many a sombre water-door, a gondola lay tugging at its moorings, its gondoliers waiting for Cupid's votaries within; for of that decaying age it may be said truthfully, *Rien ne pèse et rien ne dure*—least of all marital vows.

Love, a naked little urchin of the canals, brimful of mirth, but without a tittle of moral sense, was here, there, and everywhere, darting from heart to heart and whispering tempting words—at the Ridotto while the gambler staked his sequins; in a box at the theatre while dull buffoons repeated their time-worn *lazzi,* in the crowded Piazza, at the *bottega del caffè,* the *conversazione,* and even the convent, where the nuns wore low-cut gowns and frizzed their hair. The tales the tawny gondoliers might have told had

they willed doubtless would have put those of Casanova to shame, but they knew the value of silence. "*'Voga,'* they said, and having spat in the water, they bent to the oar in silence, bearing toward oblivion the wavering mystery of a frail coffin of love." [4]

Society not only winked at infidelity, but actually legitimatized it; legitimatized infidelity being no contradiction in terms when applied to the fashionable married life in Venice in the eighteenth century, where every woman of fashion, to keep her social standing, must be attended in public by her *cicisbeo,* or, as he was also called, her *cavalier servente,* a species of lover-footman ever ready to offer her his arm, to carry her gloves, her muff, or even her poodle-dog. At the church door, the cicisbeo proffered his lady holy water daintily from his finger-tips; kneeling beside her in the nave, he held her prayer-book open at the lesson of the day; [5] the service ended, he called her gondola, and reclining beside her on the soft cushions, talked fondly of love, while claiming love's abandonments. On the promenade, at the theatre or the gambling-house, he was ever by her side. At my lady's toilette in the morning, he must preside, to offer counsel as to the modish arrangement of her

[4] Philippe Monnier: op. cit.

[5] The use of places of worship for rendezvous and love-making had become so notorious that the Council of Ten, on March 3, 1797, finally promulgated an order to the effect that "decency in churches must be more severely respected," forbidding women to come to the service immodestly dressed, and authorizing church authorities "if need be, to proceed with rigour against the guilty connivance of fathers and husbands."

beribboned *scuffia* upon the very scented curls he had helped to arrange, ay, even to lace her stays, fasten her garters, or, kneeling with her dainty shoe upon his bended knee, to tie the laces with the tact and grace of a well-bred cavalier, for, if he served my lady not well, it was her privilege to dismiss him peremptorily and choose a successor.

And what of her lord and master meanwhile? Although the cicisbeo might enter my lady's boudoir unannounced, her husband must knock, and if by chance he were present at the morning toilette, either nod approvingly or offer expert criticism on the manner of the cicisbeo's service. But the husband seldom bothered his wife at the hour of the morning toilette—or at any other hour, for that matter—his duty being to serve some other man's wife just as assiduously as some other man served his, this infectious interpretation of the golden rule being the governing law of cicisbeism. Though, in some instances, the cicisbeo was a true serving-knight who did not overstep his privileges, such a social system could lead to naught but a general debauchery of morals; for, if my lady must be in the fashion, so must the grisette, who, to quote an Italian of the day, would "rather be without bread than without a *cavalier servente*." Goldoni himself thus summarizes the life of the ladies who were attended by *cavalieri serventi* in one of his merry plays for music: [6]

[6] *Bertoldo, Bertoldino, e Cacasenno.*

CICISBEI AND MY LADY

Museo Correr

The practises I'll frankly tell to you
Of every city lady fair:
Two cicisbei in her retinue,
One stationed here, the other there;
For aye her head turns, full inclined to try
A soft glance here, and there a sigh."

Cicisbeism originated in Spain. There, when a husband could not go abroad with his wife, it was the rule that she must be accompanied by a young kinsman whose duty it was to protect her against the importunities of gallants. Introduced into Italy, this custom was adopted as a new cry of fashion, but without the relationship feature. Planted first at Genoa, this exotic soon flourished at Bologna and Florence. Loath to accept Spanish manners, Venice was slower in sowing its seeds, yet there, too, it finally waxed into a noxious overgrowth.

There was need for a patriot with the courage to denounce it, when Goldoni arose in the market place to say that cicisbeism was a disgrace to Venice; yet he said it in a way so satirically suave that, far from being offended, Venice laughed heartily. Less vigorous in his strictures upon society than Parini, the first notable poet of modern Italy, he fought with a rapier—nay, rather with a buttoned foil, which, touching society's defenceless points, betrayed its weakness without the infliction of painful wounds, his kindness and sanity preventing him from riding full tilt at stone walls or windmills. His people are the every-day people of an every-day world, not majestic world types such as Shakespeare and Molière created.

Moreover, he was unaware that the moral cracks in his age were a serious menace to its stability; so he lived tranquilly, without fear of the morrow, attacking the moral rottenness of cicisbeism in a kindly, decent way, because, as he says, "I had long regarded with astonishment those singular beings, called in Italy *cicisbei,* who are martyrs to gallantry and slaves to the whims of the fair sex."

In nearly a score of his comedies of manners, cicisbeism is handled;[7] a subject he was obliged to treat with discretion, the patricians of Venice brooking no criticism of their caste. Whenever it seemed likely that offence might be given, he laid the scene elsewhere than in Venice; hence, when cicisbeism became the subject of his satire, cities where hateful Spaniards ruled, were discreetly chosen as the scene. Moreover, the nobility he depicts is the lesser nobility—the marquises and counts—never the princes and dukes. In his *Torquato Tasso,* for instance, the Duke of Ferrara—necessary for the unfolding of the plot—is referred to by the various characters but is never shown upon the stage.[8] In his impeachment of the depraved society of his day, his daring does not equal that of Molière, who lived in an even more despotic

[7] *Il Cavaliere e la dama, La Famiglia dell' antiquario, La Dama prudente, La Moglie saggia, La Villeggiatura, Il Festino, La Sposa sagace, La Casa nova, Le Femmine puntigliose, Il Cavaliere di buon gusto, Il Geloso avaro, L'Adulatore, Il Cavaliere di spirito, L'Uomo prudente, I Rusteghi.*

[8] "The mistrustful Venetian aristocracy would never have tolerated the portrayal and revelation of itself upon the stage in the ignoble sight of the subject multitude." Giuseppe Guerzoni: *Il Teatro italiano nel secolo XVIII.*

age; yet during the eighteenth century, all Italian writers of comedy attacked the follies of society, particularly cicisbeism, with timidity; therefore it seems unjust to charge Goldoni with an undue want of courage.

Although cicisbeism is depicted strikingly in *The Cavalier and the Lady* (*Il Cavaliere e la dama*), it is but an atmospheric background for the virtue of Eleonora, a poor but estimable lady, whose husband has been banished, and whom, to quote her own words, "necessity can never teach to forget her duty." Although she lives humbly with a faithful handmaiden, and endeavours to fill an empty larder with the proceeds of her fancy work, an unscrupulous lawyer, with a case to prosecute for her, empties her purse as rapidly as a generous landlord and a constant lover find surreptitious means of filling it. Don Rodrigo, the latter, foils the lawyer, however, and meanwhile loves Eleonora truly but respectfully throughout three sentimental acts, until her husband, dying an exile, bequeaths her to him. Moreover, he is a moral exponent, his refusal to fight a duel being the source of many a sneer on the part of the patrician box-holders, yet a merited rebuke to a savage custom.

And what of cicisbeism? the reader will ask, Don Rodrigo being not a real but an ideal cicisbeo—kind, faithful, and discreet. This faultless hero and his immaculate sweetheart, to quote Goldoni, are "two virtuous people who serve as a contrast to the ridiculous people" against whom the satire of the play is di-

rected, sprightly scenes that expose society's foibles being interspersed with the lachrymose scenes.

Though Eleonora and Rodrigo make love in the mawkish way of Richardson and his school, men and women of fashion appear who are drawn to the life —Don Flaminio and Donna Claudia, his wife; Don Alonso, the latter's cicisbeo from a sense of duty rather than choice; and Donna Flaminia, the lady whom Claudia's husband serves. Donna Claudia, however, is the arch worlding of them all, *une femme détraquée,* such as French boudoir novelists delight in depicting. Witness this scene, in which, arising long after the sun has crossed the meridian, she nags her poor footman to distraction:

CLAUDIA

Balestra.

BALESTRA

Your ladyship!

CLAUDIA

Bring me that small table.

BALESTRA

Does your ladyship wish anything else?

CLAUDIA

No. (*Exit Balestra.*) My callers are late this morning.—Balestra.

BALESTRA (*Re-entering.*)

Your ladyship!

CLAUDIA

Have you seen Don Alonso?

BALESTRA

No, your ladyship.

CLAUDIA

That will do. (*Exit Balestra.*) My cavalier is becoming neglectful. I am afraid he's growing a trifle cold. He no longer comes to take his morning chocolate with me. (*Calls.*) Balestra.

BALESTRA (*Re-entering.*)

Your ladyship!

CLAUDIA

Bring me a chair.

BALESTRA

Here, your ladyship.

CLAUDIA

(*Seating herself.*) (*Aside.*) At this hour my husband is surely paying his respects to his lady-love. (*To Balestra.*) What are you doing, standing there stiff as a poker?

BALESTRA

Awaiting your ladyship's orders.

CLAUDIA

When I wish you, I'll call.

BALESTRA

Yes, your ladyship. (*Exit Balestra.*)

CLAUDIA

It bores me to distraction to be alone.—Balestra.

(*Re-enter Balestra.*)

CLAUDIA

Balestra.

BALESTRA

Here, your ladyship.

CLAUDIA

Why didn't you answer, you donkey?

BALESTRA

I thought your ladyship saw me. (*Aside.*) Pest take her.

CLAUDIA

What time did your master go out?

BALESTRA

At eight o'clock,[9] your ladyship. (*Starts to leave.*)

CLAUDIA

Wait. Did he leave no word?

BALESTRA

None, your ladyship.

CLAUDIA

You may go. That's all I wish.

BALESTRA

I go, I go. (*Exit.*)

CLAUDIA

If no caller comes, I'll go to see Donna Virginia.—Balestra.

BALESTRA (*Re-entering.*)

Your ladyship!

CLAUDIA

Tell the coachman to harness the horses.

BALESTRA

Yes, your ladyship. (*Exit.*)

CLAUDIA

But to go driving without a cavalier? No, that's something that simply cannot be done.—Balestra.

BALESTRA (*Re-entering.*)

Your ladyship!

CLAUDIA

I wish nothing.

BALESTRA

Your ladyship wishes nothing?

CLAUDIA

No.

BALESTRA

Your ladyship does not wish the carriage?

[9] Literally, at thirteen o'clock, in accordance with the Italian system of recording time, the new day beginning at sunset in the eighteenth century.

CLAUDIA

No, I tell you; plague take you!

BALESTRA

(*Aside.*) What a brute, what a brute! (*Exit.*)

CLAUDIA

Really, Don Alonso is too rude. If he continues to neglect me, I'll be tempted to let Chevalier Asdrubel attend me.

BALESTRA (*Re-entering.*)

Your lady—

CLAUDIA

The deuce take you; I didn't call.

BALESTRA

A visitor.

CLAUDIA

Who?

BALESTRA

Don Alonso, to pay his respects.

CLAUDIA

You donkey, a *cavalier servante* does not need to be announced.[10]

Redolent Don Alonso enters, to play the equivocal rôle of a cicisbeo not over-fond of his task; then Donna Virginia, the inamorata of Claudia's husband, drops in to gossip, the conversation turning upon virtuous Donna Eleonora, whose character when torn to shreds by the women is defended by Don Alonso, a rather good sort of young man who has been drawn into this maelstrom of worldliness because he has not the strength to stem its noisome current; whereupon Donna Claudia lashes him soundly with her malignant tongue for daring to uphold a woman who has

[10] Act I, Scene 8.

lost caste. At this juncture, Don Flaminio, her husband, enters. Goldoni's words shall tell what ensues.

FLAMINIO

What's all this noise about? Why all this rumpus?

VIRGINIA

Your wife has been abusing poor Don Alonso.

FLAMINIO

Egad, but my wife's an odd one. You don't know her yet. Some day you'll know her and then you'll sympathize with me when I'm impatient.

ALONSO

My dear fellow, I've not been negligent in my duties.

FLAMINIO

Then why did you all lose your tempers?

VIRGINIA

I'll tell you. Don Alonso took it upon himself to defend Donna Eleonora. He won't have it that Don Rodrigo is her *cavalier servente,* or, to be more exact, her benefactor. We, who know how things are, differed from him. He grew obstinate and politely told us we lied.

FLAMINIO

Oh, Don Alonso, I beg your pardon, but you're behaving badly. You should make it a rule never to praise one woman in the presence of others. Moreover, don't you know that to contradict a woman is like sailing up stream against the wind?

ALONSO

I know it perfectly; yet believe me, I can't let a virtuous woman's reputation suffer.

FLAMINIO

What's that? Does it hurt her reputation to say that Don Rodrigo serves her? I serve Donna Virginia, you serve my wife, and what harm is there in it?

ALONSO

That's all very well, but they were saying that Don Rodrigo gives her means to live upon, pays her rent, her maid's wages, and all that sort of thing.

FLAMINIO

My dear fellow, and who would pay them if not he? I like your idea. Her husband's property has been confiscated, she hasn't a penny of dowry. To speak plainly, one can't live on air.

ALONSO

But she's sold what she had, she's selling still, and she works.

CLAUDIA

Listen! How well he's informed.

VIRGINIA

Donna Claudia, what do you say to paying Donna Eleonora a visit this evening?

CLAUDIA

A visit to Donna Eleonora? That pauper isn't worthy a visit from me.

VIRGINIA

But we can see how the fine lady behaves in her reduced circumstances.

CLAUDIA

You'll find her as such ladies usually are, poor but proud.

VIRGINIA

Who knows but that we'll discover something more! I have an idea that she likes to chat. Don Alonso ought to know.

ALONSO

So far as I know, Donna Eleonora is a very retiring woman. With the exception of Don Rodrigo, no one goes to her house.

FLAMINIO

Come, I say, what'll you bet that I don't go there and become her cicisbeo?

ALONSO

I'll bet a hundred louis that you can't do it.

FLAMINIO

Make it a gold watch.

ALONSO

Agreed. I'll not back down.

FLAMINIO

Donna Virginia, are you willing that I should make the attempt and win the watch?

VIRGINIA

You are at perfect liberty to please yourself.

FLAMINIO

I'm pretty certain that, while I'm no longer serving you, there'll be plenty who'll know how to take my place beside you.

VIRGINIA

Don't worry. I'll take care of that.

FLAMINIO

And you, my dear wife, what say you?

CLAUDIA

You have conquered without doubt, say I.

FLAMINIO

Does it seem to you that I am a captivating cavalier, capable of capturing a woman's heart at the first attack?

CLAUDIA

Women of her sort are easily conquered.

FLAMINIO

The wager has been laid, therefore let's say no more about it; let's take a walk in the garden.

VIRGINIA

Agreed; let's go.

FLAMINIO

Pray give me your hand.

VIRGINIA

Here am I.

FLAMINIO

Poor Donna Virginia, how will you manage to do without me for a few days?

VIRGINIA

Believe me, I shall not suffer.

FLAMINIO

Cruel one, you are making sport of one who is dying for you.

VIRGINIA

To-morrow you will be dying for Donna Eleonora, and some day you'll come back to die for me. (*Exeunt.*)

ALONSO

Command me, so that I may have the honour of serving you.

CLAUDIA

My deepest obligations. Go, serve Donna Eleonora.

ALONSO

Impossible, she'll be plighted to your husband.

CLAUDIA

Go; there'll be room for you too. A coquette refuses no one.[11]

"To criticize the conduct of others without reflecting upon their own is the common vice of most women," exclaims Don Alonso, as Donna Claudia leaves him: then reflecting upon the state of himself and his fellow cicisbei, he continues: "Utter folly is our lot! To dance attendance for the fun of it and be subject to the ridiculous whims of a woman, all for the great honour of being enrolled among the *cavalieri serventi.*" But the real thesis of the play is expressed by Don Rodrigo, its virtuous hero, when he asks why the stealing of a man's wife should be permitted if the stealing of his purse or his watch is forbidden.

[11] Act I, Scene 10.

Unlike the too-good-to-be-true heroine of *The Cavalier and the Lady,* Donna Eularia, the heroine of *The Discreet Wife* (*La Dama prudente*), is both admirable and human, while Don Roberto, the hero —if a jealous husband may be so designated—is so naturalistically drawn that as a characterization he bears comparison with modern psychological analyses. "In Italy," says Goldoni, in speaking of this play, "there are husbands who willingly tolerate the gallants of their wives, and who even become their confidants, but there are others extremely jealous, who bear the strongest ill-will to those singular beings (the cicisbei) who are the second masters in an ill-regulated family." This state of affairs obtains not alone in Italy, but wherever the *ménage à trois* is a social institution—husbands like the husband of Goldoni's discreet wife, who conform to the customs of a "wicked, contemptuous world" so as not to appear ridiculous, being of cosmopolitan growth. In this husband's own words, they "suffer, fret, and are seared with jealousy while studying how not to show it."

Though Don Roberto's cheek grows sallow from the venom that is preying on his vitals, he is such a slave to custom that he permits his wife to be attended by cicisbei, preferring several to one in the hope that they will neutralize one another. She is willing, nay, anxious, to lead a domestic life, yet he forces her into society lest the world, thinking him jealous, should laugh. Whenever a cicisbeo is in the house, he bobs

in and out upon one pretext or another, and when she goes out to visit a friend, though he will not accompany her because of the fear of being laughed at, he forces two cavaliers instead of one into the carriage and runs on ahead to the house to which she is going, a struggle between jealousy and conventionality ever raging in this poor man's heart.

Donna Eularia, the discreet wife of this victim of "the ugliest fiend of hell" is by far the most womanly of Goldoni's heroines and a model wife for all time. To her husband, she says, "I have no pleasure save being with you: all the rest of the world means nothing to me"; to the cicisbei who attend her, she is indifferent, and when they become importunate, she snubs them deftly by assuring them that, if their aspirations ever pass the bounds of propriety, she will find the means of "getting rid of them without disturbing her husband's peace of mind." "I may lack the talent and wit to shine in society," she adds, "but I do not lack the prudence needed to defend my family's reputation, and any one who judges me rashly will rue it." This is no idle boast. Donna Eularia does possess the prudence needed to defend her family's reputation. Never losing her self-control during Don Robert's fits of jealousy, she manages her cicisbei with an equal tact, forcing them to become friends after they have quarrelled over her and fought a duel, while keeping, by her cleverness, all knowledge of this duel from the public and her husband—a triumph of tact which is rewarded by her husband's

willing acquiescence in her desire to go to a remote place in the country where cicisbei are unknown. Thus a loving couple, whom worldliness has separated, retires to a desert such as Alceste, the misanthrope, longed for in vain, Eularia being no heartless coquette like Célimène, but a woman "who, in the midst of so much deceit and domestic indifference, is sincere." [12]

Goldoni is thoroughly aware, however, that, in a land where cicisbeism obtains, discreet wives, and husbands whose love is legitimate even though jealous, are the exception rather than the rule, his other fashionable wives and husbands being moulded of a different clay. For instance, in *The Flatterer* (*L'Adulatore*), a comedy with melodramatic tendencies, inspired by *Le Flatteur* of Jean-Baptiste Rousseau, the protagonist—a parasitic rake and hypocrite —flatters the husbands in order that he may corrupt the wives; while one of the latter is so lost to decency that she borrows money of her cicisbeo without a qualm. Equally shorn of moral sense is Don Florindo, in *The Punctilious Ladies* (*Le Femmine puntigliose*), a complaisant husband who lets his wife spend his money on her cicisbeo because he is born, as Maria Merlato remarks, to be "led by the nose"; [13] while a miserly, eavesdropping husband in *The Jealous Miser* (*Il Geloso avaro*), is so despicable that he appropriates the presents given his wife, accusing her, meantime, of having given illegal cause for their re-

[12] Maria Merlato: *Mariti e cavalier serventi nelle commedie del Goldoni.* [13] Op. cit.

ceipt. Don Properzio, too, the husband of Donna Giulia, the title character of *The Contriving Woman* (*La Donna di maneggio*), is another miserly lord and master, who scrimps and frets till his wife, a meddler in the love affairs of her friends, contrives to get the better of him by acquiescing in his parsimony. Rosaura, the rich bourgeois girl, married to a nobleman, whose marital unhappiness forms the subject of *The Sensible Wife* (*La Moglie saggia*), is a commendable spouse, however; Pantalone, her father, being the prototype of good Monsieur Poirier; her neglectful husband, a Venetian Duc de Presles.

It is in *The House Party* (*La Villeggiatura*), however, that Goldoni paints his most lifelike picture of fashionable husbands and wives—a picture so vivid that the colours have not been dimmed by time. Indeed, this house party might have taken place on the moors of Scotland during the last grouse season, in England when coverts were last drawn, or in France when last the *cor de chasse* was sounding in the forest, ay, even at Roslyn, or Aiken, so thoroughly cosmopolitan are the characters, so modern the situations of this play.

"Villeggiatura" means literally "country life" or "the season spent in the country"; yet "house party" better describes the gathering under the roof of Donna Lavinia that forms the background of a play of domestic infelicity Donnay or Pinero might well have penned yesterday instead of Goldoni a century and a half ago. Being wedded to a bluff country

squire, who spends his days in partridge shooting and his nights in snoring, Donna Lavinia has a cicisbeo, Don Paoluccio, to whom she has ever been faithful, though her friends change theirs, as they do their style of dress, every spring and autumn. She would not have this one, did her husband not live entirely for his gross pleasures; for, when the comedy opens, fearful lest her suffering will lead her from the playful hands of cicisbeism into the destructive arms of passion, she warns her husband of Paoluccio's return from a tour of Europe, made with her consent, but the husband's only admonition, regarding a wolf about to enter his fold, is that he be given any bed in the house except his. Donna Lavinia appeals to this soulless creature to live with her as other men live with their wives, yet he scorns her bed and board because she will not consent to retire at sunset and arise to chanticleer's call; in a word, because she will not give up society and become a domestic drudge.

"I would n't give up shooting for all the money in the world," he says. "Not even for your wife's sake?" she answers scornfully. "For your husband's sake you won't give up society," he retorts; whereupon she replies, "Well, have your shooting, only let me enjoy society." "Will you go to bed when I do?" he asks; "will you go to bed at ten o'clock?" "Yes, if you will stay in bed until ten o'clock." "The devil!" he protests; "I could n't stay in bed twelve hours." Nor will he stop bringing peasant girls into the house while his wife and her friends are there. "The

remedy is easy to find, my dear," he says to her protest; "you don't wish them here; I do; therefore go away yourself." This brutal insult is the parting of the ways. "Never will you see me here another year," she answers in righteous indignation. When, happy in the thought that henceforth he will be let alone, he leaves her, she, convinced at last of her right to lead her life in her own way, exclaims, "Amuse yourself with your low-born wenches! You deserve to be loved just as much as I am loved!" Indifferent alike to appeal and threat, this conscienceless husband seeks the society of two peasant girls. By giving his presents and their affections to a pair of younger swains, they unwittingly avenge a wife who, meanwhile, is being taught her own lesson in love's bad faith.

Don Paoluccio, the cicisbeo to whom she has long been loyal, returns—like many an American young man who has been abroad—with his head completely turned; a Franco-maniac, liberated, as he believes, from prejudices, yet, in reality, so enthralled by cosmopolitan vices that he refuses to believe his lady-love has been constant during the two whole years he has been away. "While I was abroad," says he, "I was never constant more than fifteen days at a time." When condescendingly he seeks to return to the good graces of Donna Lavinia, she answers bitterly, "For fifteen days I shall make no other engagement"—too subtle an irony for so heartless a rake!

Poor Donna Lavinia! Loyal by nature, she is

taught, first by a brutal husband, then by a shallow cicisbeo, that loyalty is a drug on love's market. Her friend Donna Florida's plan of having different cicisbei for town and country, whom for the life of her she cannot recall when they are out of her sight, is a plan far likelier than loyalty to succeed in that decadent society; for even while Donna Lavinia's loving heart is being seared to hardness by Paoluccio's neglect, this nice young man, to whom the words "bounder" and "cad" would be applicable were he of our day, proposes to flightly Donna Florida a *"liaison à la parisienne,"* which, being secret, shall leave them both free to flirt in public. In order to demonstrate the price he attaches to his liberty, as well as the catholicity of his taste, he proceeds forthwith to make love to his host's peasant girls, in which brazen act he is caught by Donna Lavinia. Her conjugal and sentimental ideals being shattered almost simultaneously, she is too dazed to attempt the laborious task of picking up the pieces and gluing them into some vague semblance of the gods she has worshipped. In the words of M. Dejob, a sympathetic French writer,[14] "She is primitively virtuous, yet being the slave of fashion and neglected by her husband, she has not the courage to imprison herself within the walls of her duty." Don Mauro, fickle Donna Florida's discarded cicisbeo, is caught by her on the rebound, these two disconsolate hearts consoling each other in this play just as discarded hearts so often do in real life; M. Dejob

[14] *Les Femmes dans la comédie française et italienne au XVIIIe siècle.*

remarking cynically that "in real life Donna Lavinia would not take a new cicisbeo but a new lover."

It is love, after all, that distinguishes her from the other women in Goldoni's comedies who are served by cicisbei; for, as Maria Merlato points out, "Donna Lavinia is the only Goldonian woman who does not treat her *cavalier servente* as a coxcomb, or a buffoon, but as a gentleman whom she both esteems and respects." [15] More than that, she is the most real of our dramatist's women, her character being so psychologically true that, in the comedy that tells her story, he may be said to have anticipated the modern problem play by nearly a century and a half. If Donna Eularia, the discreet wife, is a lovable woman, Donna Lavinia, this frail wife, is simply a loving woman whose heart is stifled by indifference—a woman of Vanity Fair.

Yet Goldoni's purpose in writing *The House Party* was not to vivisect a feminine heart, but rather to admonish society for its luxury and prodigality. He had passed the early summer of 1754 at Modena and Milan, and on his way back to Venice, he found the subject for his play in a manner best stated in his own words:

> I had observed, in my journey, a number of country-houses along the banks of the Brenta, where all the pomp of luxury was displayed. In former times, our ancestors frequented these spots for the sole purpose of collecting their revenue, and their descendants go there merely to spend theirs. In the country they

[15] Op cit.

keep open table, play high, give balls and theatrical entertainments, and the Italian cicisbeo system is there indulged without disguise or constraint, and gains more ground than elsewhere.

He does not overdraw the picture. If the winter of Venetian society was a carnival, its summer was a *fête à la Watteau;* for, when it was not gambling or dancing minuets, the powdered and patched society of that day, to whom the *villeggiatura* was a social necessity, tripped merrily through cool, shady boskets to the banks of the Brenta, where Love's barge lay moored and fluttering Love himself was whispering that, on the magic isle of Cythera, stood his mother's fair temple. Yes, Watteau knew that life, and so did Goldoni, but while the one painted his *fêtes galantes* so entrancingly that we sigh for a visit to the isle where Venus dwells, the other shows us that the open table and high play of those villas, where "all the pomp of luxury was displayed," and the love fêtes on the Brenta's bank, were not *Les Agréments de l'été* or *Les Charmes de la vie,* as Watteau calls them, but the road to moral decay and financial ruin.

After telling of the circumstances that led to writing *The House Party,* Goldoni adds: "I gave a view of all these circumstances some time afterward in three related plays." These three plays form a trilogy—the principal characters appearing in them all—and are called, respectively, *The Rage for Country Life* (*Le Smanie della villeggiatura*), *Hazards of Country Life* (*Le Avventure della villeggiatura*),

MY LADY'S TOILET

Museo Correr

and *The Return from the Country* (*Il Ritorno dalla villeggiatura*).[16] Though the atmosphere of the comedies in this series is deliciously clear, they are less happy both in story and characterization than *The House Party*. We see a fashionable coterie preparing to leave for the country; we see them at their villas playing faro—the auction bridge of that day; we see them eating, drinking, gossiping, and making love; and we finally see them return to the city after having squandered in a month of lavish entertainment the revenues of an entire year: yet the dramatic material of the trilogy is barely sufficient for a single comedy. Indeed, the agonized efforts of a social climber to force a ladies' tailor to the finishing of a garment called a *mariage—le dernier cri de Paris* —in time to vie in stylishness with a rival whom she hates and envies; the gambling, gossiping, eating, drinking, and love-making during a *villeggiatura* near Leghorn—a more discreet place for satirizing Venetian society than the banks of the Brenta; the tittle-tattle of the servants about their masters; the rascality of a pair of waiters at a country inn; and the antics of a gluttonous snob and sponge named Ferdinando are all more diverting than the attenuated story that carries an uninteresting quartette of lovers through three plays that might well be condensed into three acts.

[16] *I Malcontenti*, a play in which the *villeggiatura* craze of Venetian society is also pictured, may be called a prologue to this trilogy. In it similar characters appear and a similar story is told. A play within a play in this comedy has been held with little verisimilitude to have been inspired by Shakespeare.

Yet Goldoni admits that the telling of this double love-story was not the object he had in view. "I wished to present in the first play the inordinate passion of Italians for country life, and, by the second, to demonstrate the dangers induced by the liberty that obtains in such a society." The particular object he had in view in writing the last, and by far the least interesting, comedy of the *villeggiatura* series is not so apparent, since, in the epilogue spoken by a character at the close of *Hazards of Country Life,* he admits frankly that "the play is finished, though, if something still remains to be unravelled, it will form the subject of a third play on the same topic."

Yet commonplace though the story of the *villeggiatura* series is, its plays shed a brilliant sidelight upon the society of Venice when on its annual terra firma outing. Lawn parties, water parties, and riding parties, refreshments served in forest glades on lace-trimmed napery, comedies played in gorgeous drawing-rooms, moonlit masquerades upon the river, faro till the dawn—a *villeggiatura* was, as M. Monnier says, "a maskless carnival where Folly came with face uncovered" [17]—the same Folly who reigns wherever the idle born squander their patrimony in social rivalry. Reading Goldoni's dialogue, it is not difficult to fancy oneself at Newport. "Giacinta is a young girl," says her rival Vittoria, "yet she dresses precisely like a married woman. Indeed, to-day, you can't tell the girls from the married women." When

[17] Op. cit.

Ferdinando, the snob, says he has just refused an invitation to an old-fashioned house where they sup at nine and go to bed at ten, Vittoria answers: "I wouldn't lead such a life for all the money on earth. If I go to bed before dawn, it is quite impossible for me to sleep"; whereupon her brother adds: "At our house we play cards or dance till dawn, but we never dine until eight; indeed, after our little game of faro, we usually see the sun rise." "That is living," sighs Vittoria;—living the way society lives wherever Satan finds employment for its idle hands.

In *The Rattlepate* (*La Donna di testa debole*), Goldoni presents a euphuistic widow of noble birth, surrounded by a troop of pedantic flatterers, and so unsparing is its satire of both culture-seeking women and the literary leeches who thrive upon their foibles, that, with a certain justice, it may be termed the Italian *Précieuses ridicules.* Although this comedy failed dismally at the time of its production, its irony is nevertheless so keen that Professor De Gubernatis [18] places it on a plane of equality with Pailleron's notable satire of false romanticism.[19] Yet ruthless as is its portrayal of the sort of woman who still pursues culture breathlessly, it is too deficient in truly dramatic situations to fulfil this Italian critic's hope that "it may merit in our day the honours of the stage, and win applause."

The Impostor (*Il Raggiratore*), tells the story of a bogus nobleman's attempt to marry the heiress to the

[18] Op cit. [19] *Le Monde ou l'on s'ennuie.*

mortgaged estates of Don Eraclio, an impoverished patrician who, asserting descent from the Emperor Heraclius and discovering in an historical dictionary that there are thirty-seven towns called Eraclio, proudly styles himself "Eraclio, lord of thirty-seven towns," even though his wife's jewels are in pawn and his creditors are taking legal measures to possess themselves of his palace. The spurious count, who gives the play its title, schemes with a venal lawyer to antedate a marriage contract between Don Eraclio's daughter and himself, thereby feathering his own nest as well as outwitting his future father-in-law's creditors. Before this is compassed, however, the impostor's peasant father arrives to unmask him, and poor Don Eraclio, bereft of his palace, is forced to seek an asylum in a madhouse, "a place worthy," as he says, "of a poor, presumptuous man, who, seeking to glorify himself with the vanity of the past, is ruined in the present, only to be worse off in the future." Don Eraclio's story is a lesson in vainglory, as true to the life of our day as to that in which it was penned.

In *The Feudatory* (*Il Feudatario*), the seigneurial phase of country life is shown; a young marquis, on taking possession of his inherited estates, attempting to possess himself of the wives and daughters of his retainers as well. He has to deal, however, with pretty Chitta's husband, Cecco, a sturdy deputy, who, having shot four men, itches to level his carbine at a fifth, a desire from which he is dissuaded by the proposal of his comrades that their landlord's castle be

burned and he treated like the lambs of their flocks. Caught in shepherd's guise making love to Chitta, the marquis is beaten soundly by Cecco, who threatens to shoot him should he repeat the offence, whereupon, marrying, at his tactful mother's suggestion, a romantic orphan of the Mlle. de Seiglière type, with a claim to his estates, he ends the danger to his life and a tiresome lawsuit as well. The reader feels, however, that, as soon as the honeymoon has waned, he will go forth again to prey upon his retainers' wives unless awed by Cecco's trusty carbine.

As in the case of the *villeggiatura* trilogy, the brilliance of *The Feudatory* lies mainly in the sidelight shed upon society, one scene in particular, where the mother of the young marquis receives a delegation of the wives of her son's retainers being exceedingly human, and, according to Goldoni, taken from life. These good women, flustered in the presence of a grand lady, strive to show that they are accustomed to society, till, assuming equality, they are told abruptly that they belong to "the lower class" (*basso rango*) —a term they have never before heard. One of their number suggests that it means they are of the lower country, not the mountains, an explanation that makes them acknowledge with pride that they are of the lower class; whereupon, to make conversation, one of them asks the marchioness "how much flax is worth in Naples," only to be hushed by a friend's query as to why she should expect Her Excellency to know about such things. "A marchioness would n't spin

like the people of our sort," the friend whispers; "she would make lace and embroider." Chocolate being brought, these worthy souls do not know what the "black stuff" is. Making wry faces, they smell it, and when it scalds their throats, spit it out without more ado; but their lack of breeding becomes most apparent when the heroine of the play, whom they think their inferior, is treated with more consideration than themselves, for then they flounce out of the marchioness's drawing-room, their common noses in the air.

The rich young feudatories tarried in the country no longer than the cicisbei and the dolls of fashion. The hot spell passed, the *villeggiatura* ended, they went to town for the opening of the autumn season, the theatres, and the Ridotto. Night amusement for the Venetian there was a-plenty, but his days he must pass in his cicisbea's boudoir, at a gaming-house, or at a tavern. There being no clubs in Venice, the tavern became a sort of public club where congenial spirits gathered to sip their chocolate and to gossip, just as the Parisians gather now at the cafés on the boulevard at the hour of the *apéritif*.

In *The Mistress of the Inn* (*La Locandiera*), Goldoni paints a delightful picture of such a tavern club. Mirandolina, the landlady, is both comely and sprightly; the customers flirt with her; and having an eye for business, she keeps them on tenter-hooks, for, while they are kept guessing in the matter of her preference, they are buying chocolate or wine

to her profit; a venal coquetry that served to fire the hearts of a pair of old codgers—the one a blue-blooded marquis, the other a parvenu count—with a desire to marry her, if only for the comfort of being permanently well cared for. The pot-boy, longing both for his mistress and her profitable business, resents these attentions. Meanwhile, the Cavaliere di Ripafratta, a confirmed bachelor, with an aversion to the sex, alighting at this delectable inn, the hostess sets her trim cap for him, just for the sport of teaching a woman-hater to respect her sex; while he, inexperienced in coquetry, falls an easy prey to one so skilled and offers her his heart and hand.

From this embarrassment of riches, the comely hostess must make a choice. To be the Marchesa di Forlipopoli, with a title as old as the hills and a fortune as bare as they, or the Contessa d'Albafiorita, with a brazen title bought only yesterday? How could a sensible woman sacrifice a profitable business for either horn of this noble dilemma? For the Cavaliere di Ripafratta, the woman hater, to whom she has taught the futility of defying her sex, she has a hankering, yet, being endowed with common sense, she realizes that, though lovely in a tap-room, she might be an eyesore in a drawing-room; hence, rather than to mate above her station, she gives her hand to her faithful pot-boy, and these profitable words to her disconsolate admirers:

In changing my estate, I intend to change my habits; therefore, gentlemen, may you profit by what you have seen, both to the

advantage and the well-being of your hearts; and if ever you should find yourselves in the position of wondering whether to yield or fall, think of the cunning you have been taught, and remember the Mistress of the Inn.

This is the story of a comedy in which Goldoni demonstrates his mastery both in stage-craft and characterization perhaps more fully than in any single play. In this pretty ado about nothing, Mirandolina, an eighteenth century Beatrice, brings a surly Benedick to her feet but condemns him to perpetual bachelorhood for having presumed to doubt the allurement of her sex. Bold, coy, tender, or indifferent, as suits her, this captivating mistress of an inn where old codgers congregate to woo her, is a mistress, too, of love's ingenuity,—the essence of coquetry, the secret of her charm, being best told in her own words:

I like the roast, but not the smoke. If I had married all who have asked me, I should have far too many husbands, for all who arrive at my inn fall in love with me and make love to me and most of them propose to me. . . . But the men who run after me soon bore me. Nobility will not do for me; I esteem wealth and, again, I don't esteem it. My joy consists in being courted, admired, and adored. Indeed, that is my weakness, as it is the weakness of most women. Having no need of any one, I don't worry about marrying; I lead a decent life and I enjoy my liberty. I chat with all, yet fall in love with none; for I mean to laugh at all these caricatures of passionate lovers and, moreover, I mean to use all my arts in capturing, felling, and breaking the rude, hard hearts that are opposed to us, the best thing Dame Nature ever brought into the world."

The two old codgers who woo her, represent the

peerage and the "beerage" of that day. "Between you and me there is a difference," says the Marchese di Forlipopoli—blue of blood, empty of purse—to the Conte d'Albafiorita, his parvenu rival for Mirandolina's hand. "At this inn, my money is as good as yours," is the sneering retort. "I am the Marchese di Forlipopoli," proudly answers the patrician, whose family tree is the only tree left upon a once fertile estate. "And I am the Conte d'Albafiorita," replies his wealthy rival, in an upstart's attempt to assume an equality he knows in his inmost heart does not exist. "A count!" sneers the marquis, "a purchased countship!" "I bought the countship when you sold the marquisate," is the parvenu's retort; whereupon the patrician, drawing himself up to his full height, exclaims frigidly, "Enough! I am who I am, and you owe me respect." After the parvenu has tipped him, and the patrician given him naught but insolence, the pot-boy sums up the truth by saying that "funds, not titles, win respect away from home," a perennial, though homely epigram.

There are Marquises of Forlipopoli and Counts of Albafiorita still; there is many a crusty bachelor, too, like the Cavaliere di Ripafratta, who, believing love for a woman "an unbearable weakness in a man," has never been in love and vows he never will be; until some pretty Mirandolina flouts that "may her nose drop off, if she doesn't make him fall in love with her before the morrow." To quote her once more: "Who can resist a woman when a man gives

her the time to bring her arts to bear? He who flees, need not fear to be conquered; but he who stays, listens, and enjoys her society, must fall sooner or later in spite of himself." Mirandolina not being a fine lady, the comedy concerning her is perhaps not a society comedy in the narrower sense of the term. Yet she is not a bourgeoise either—her mind being broad—nor an ignorant, superstitious woman of the people. A winsome cosmopolite, she is a self-made woman, whose conflict with life has taught her to know mankind as well as what is best for herself. Being wooed by titled lovers, her introduction into a chapter devoted to plays of the world of fashion may perhaps be pardonable.[20]

Goldoni, a bourgeois himself, viewed society from the antechamber—hence he has been said to have lacked an intimate knowledge of the subject, Baretti, a contemporary, even accusing him of making princesses talk like ladies' maids. Yet so true to the life of our time are many of his pictures of society that, if Baretti's charge be just, it may be said that the princesses of to-day talk like the ladies' maids of

[20] Goldoni was reproved by Grimm (*Correspondance*) for not causing Mirandolina to fall in love with the woman-hater, an obviously happy ending any playwright might have conceived. Of the widespread popularity of *La Locandiera,* the great number of translations and adaptations is irrefutable evidence. In his article in the *Rivista d'Italia* for November, 1907, E. Maddalena mentions thirty-eight adaptations and translations of this comedy, five of which are anonymous. Six are in French, five in English, nine in German, seven in Spanish, two each in Russian, Portuguese, and Hungarian, and one each in Danish, Greek, Polish, Roumanian, Czech, and Croatian. Among the more prominent actresses who have impersonated Mirandolina are Mlle. Candeille, Carlotta Hagn, Teresa Peche, Irene Vanbrugh, and Eleonora Duse.

Goldoni's time. Only yesterday, however, a Frenchman said of this genial Venetian's pictures of society:

His comedies give but a mediocre idea of brilliant Venice. Save for a few obscure folk the characters are all virtuous and possessed of but slight gaiety. Among them there are no debauchees, Cyprians, or wary senators, only prudent fathers, good mothers, and submissive sons; no adventurers or freebooters, only merchants whose souls are honour.[21]

Goldoni did paint society both with truth and spirit, even though he did not paint it obscenely enough for this Frenchman's taste. Moreover he had ideals, not only of society, but of all that constitutes life; witness this passage from *The Post Inn* (*L'Osteria della posta*), a one-act comedy of intrigue that, in its treatment recalls the stilted French comedy of that day, though the broad philosophy here quoted is as unlike *Marivaudage* as the clear tones of a clarion are unlike the delicate notes of a flute:

The study of literature is a diversion for the mind which does not rob the heart of its humanity. Love is a natural passion felt in the midst of the most serious or the most trivial occupations. He who knows only how to love must of necessity grow weary occasionally of his own joy, and what is still worse, weary of the object of his affection. Study, on the contrary, divides the heart equably; it teaches us to love with more delicacy, it makes us realize more thoroughly the merits of the loved one, and the fires of love are more vivid and brilliant after the heart has breathed and the mind has been amused. Let us now consider society —unlucky he who spurns it. Society makes a man civil and amiable and strips him of the savage rudeness that is his bane. A

[21] Charles Verrier: *Goldoni et la réforme du théâtre italien. La grande Revue*, Feb. 25, 1908.

misanthrope, a recluse, is a burden to his family, a torment to his wife. A man who does not like society himself will naturally not be disposed to permit his wife to enjoy it. Howsoever great may be their mutual love, it is hardly possible that they may be together from morning till night without a thousand opportunities for losing their tempers; for love is in great danger of soon degenerating into boredom, distaste, and even aversion.

Looking at life through the smoked glasses of a realism that were better called biasism, many a modern dramatist sees only life's shadows. Forgetting that in the country and by the sea mankind breathes good, fresh air, he poisons his lungs with the noxious air of crowded streets; holding his nose to the ordures of life as he examines them, he forgets that life's flowers have perfumes that are sweet. Believing that the theatre was the "best, the most useful, and the most necessary of relaxations," Goldoni, the kindly naturalist, presented life, not as a cadaver to be dissected at a clinic of the morbid, but as a humorous and truthful picture painted vividly in the sunlight for the delight of his fellow-man, not his undoing. He is an optimist with a helpful smile ever upon his gentle lip. Nowhere is this more apparent than in his pictures of the corrupt society of Venice, though it is unjust to say that his characters are all virtuous. There are "debauchees, Cyprians, wary senators, adventurers, and freebooters" a-plenty in his plays; yet, side by side with them, to point the moral that the world is not all corrupt, never has been, and never will be, are "prudent fathers, good mothers, submissive sons," and faithful

wives. In the breadth of Goldoni's sane vision and in the cleanliness of his mind, quite as much as in his unfailing humour and gaiety, lie the sources of his glory.

IX

COMEDIES OF THE BOURGEOISIE

IN fully a score of Goldoni's comedies, the sturdy life of mercantile Venice is presented; in as many more, the upper bourgeoisie is shown knocking at the doors of patrician society. Like every middle class, that of Venice formed the backbone of a people, Goldoni's Pantalone being its representative on the stage. Whenever he appears, the play by his presence is given a middle-class flavour, for he is always the Venetian merchant speaking in the soft Venetian speech.

"Pantalone de' Bisognosi, *mercante veneziano,*" is the way his name appears among the *dramatis personæ* of some thirty of the comedies; in several others, a part similar to his is allotted to Anselmo or Pancrazio, who, like him, are Venetian merchants. Goldoni's Pantalone, however, differs widely from the buffoonish part which bears his name in the Improvised Comedy. Instead of being duped by the other characters, he holds the threads of the play between his ink-stained fingers while voicing the precepts of the author. He it is who typifies the conservatism and moral worth of Venice, proud mistress of the Adriatic, in the days before luxury had sapped her

strength. He is fond of order, peace, and good living. Although, as he says in *The Whimsical Old Man* (*Il Vecchio bizzarro*), he eats "good food," it must be "pure food that he knows will not make him ill."

A citizen of free Venice, Pantalone was no vassal of an overlord. On the contrary, he was a merchant of Venice, and his forbears had been merchants, too, proud of their calling. He did not wear a sword, yet he had a sharp tongue, ever ready to defend his rights. As he says in *The Swindler* (*L'Impostore*), "Although I am old, I am not afraid; and if I don't know how to use a sword, I have enough of a tongue to give my reasons in the face of no matter whom." In *The Cavalier and the Lady,* when he is called "a vile merchant and a plebeian" by patrician Don Flaminio, he thus proudly defends his estate:

> If you knew what it means to be a merchant, you would not speak like that. . . . Commerce is useful to the world, necessary to the life of nations, and he who, like myself, practises it honourably should not be called plebeian. More plebeian is he who, having inherited a title and a little land, spends his days in idleness, believing himself privileged to trample every one under foot and live a life of domination. The vile man is he who does not recognize his duty, who foolishly and unjustly vaunts his arrogance, making others realize that, though noble by the accident of birth, he deserves to have been born plebeian.[1]

Brave sentiments for such an age! As M. Monnier points out, Pantalone "represented in Venice a new condition of things, a new condition of the heart

[1] The character who speaks these democratic sentiments, though called Anselmo, has the attributes of Pantalone.

—the third estate."[2] Yet, outspoken as he is at times, Goldoni's Pantalone is, after all, a bourgeois, conservative to the core—a respecter of vested rights, meddling with neither politics nor religion, and believing that what is, should be. Arrayed in the dress of his fathers, he is faithful to a glorious past, ever guarding his traditions as zealously as he guards his home. In *The Prudent Man* (*L'Uomo prudente*), for instance, Pantalone is a middle-class husband unswayed by fashion—a man with the tradition of a past century, who, finding a cicisbeo in his house, administers this feudal admonition:

> You don't deserve ever to leave this place alive, and I ought to have you drawn and quartered. But I am human and I love my neighbour as myself; I shall therefore content myself by warning you as a brother and a friend. Do not eye my wife or daughter either little or much, and never set foot in my house again; above all, take care that you tell no one of what has happened here this evening. In case you ever dare to approach this house, I tell you in confidence that, beneath one of the steps, there is a trap and that, to precipitate you into a pit filled with nails and razors, all I have to do is to touch a secret spring. In case you try to meet my wife and daughter elsewhere, or if you are so rash as to blab, I have enough sequins in my purse to pay for having you shot in the back without any one suspecting whence the shot comes. I speak to you about this calmly and without anger. Profit by my advice and let your conduct be prudent.

This burgher with the sentiments of the Middle Ages even threatens to bury his wife alive; yet he is not without a fine sense of honour, for, when the lady, seeking to put an end to him by placing poison

[2] Op. cit.

in his pottage, is exposed by the death of a dog which had partaken of it and is arrested for her crime, he defends her in open court and obtains her acquittal, "his tenderness," to quote his author, "finally winning the hearts of his enemies, his prudence saving the honour of his family."

Conservative, middle-class Pantalone is indeed out of sympathy with the new-fangled ways of cicisbeism and a fashionable society which turns night into day. He will not let the women of his family show themselves half dressed to the gallants who lace their stays; they may not receive actresses in his house, nor give progressive dinners in the latest fashion by serving the soup, the roast, and the dessert each on a separate table in a separate room. When his women go abroad, their eyelids are lowered demurely; water, not pomade, is used to sleek their hair; and when company comes to the house, their toilet consists merely in the removing of their aprons, for, though they have jewels, their pride lies in the possession, not the showing.

The Rialto, with its banks, shops, and exchanges, is Pantalone's Venice, and there, amid the hum of traffic, he labours till the bell of the Rialtina strikes the hour when he may go to his hermetically sealed house in a narrow street away from the joys of the Piazza, a house as carefully closed as his heart to the merry sounds of the carnival. There he puts on his red slippers, takes a pinch of snuff from his horn snuff-box, adjusts his spectacles, and settles himself

in his favourite chair to pass his evening in a quiet corner of Venice, where the only sound to disturb him is a neighbouring cobbler's song or the groaning of the organ at the parish church. Knitting stockings, scratching her head with her needle from time to time, Eufemia, his fat wife, sits beside him: though outwardly demure, Rosaura and Diana, his pretty daughters, stifle in the close atmosphere of that room, "where," to quote M. Monnier once more, "the furniture and the cares are always in the same place." [3] Their youthful blood is not yet frozen, therefore each of these pretty girls imagines herself to be a *zentildonna* and sighs for a cicisbeo or that latest gown from Paris, a *mariage*. Ashamed of his father's calling, Eugenio, the brother of these bourgeois maidens, is meanwhile swaggering in the Piazza and pretending to be a gentleman, or mayhap losing some of his father's hard-earned sequins at the gaming-tables of that rogue Pandolfo, fleecer of unwary youths. If not there, the young scapegrace is perchance paying his tender respects to Lisaura, the ballet-dancer, who lives next door to Pandolfo; for only when his purse is empty does Pantalone's son seek the parental hearthside.

When Pantalone dies, wayward Eugenio inherits his fortune and business, neglects his young wife, and gambles his patrimony away at the tables of Pandolfo. Ridolfo, who keeps the coffee-house hard by, was once his father's servant. With com-

[3] Op cit.

mendable attachment for the family he has served, this worthy man laments the bad habits of his former master's son, reproves him, so far as he dares, lends him money without his knowing whence it comes, and "partly by good advice, partly by admonitions, partly by kindness, and partly by generosity," opens the eyes of his master's unruly son and "makes another man of him."

This is the simple story of *The Coffee-House*[4] (*La Bottega del caffè*), a naturalistic comedy in Tuscan of the life of bourgeois Venice such as Goldoni wrote more frequently, though seldom more deftly, in the speech of his native city. Although this play is merely a vivacious picture of life in one of those little squares called *campielli,* where two narrow streets cross in the city of the lagoons, its characters are true, its action real, and its vivacious dialogue so unliterary as to be condemned by Baretti, a critic of Goldoni's day, as barbarous; yet so natural that one need only walk the streets of Venice to hear its like. The plot has been outlined above; there is a sub-plot, however, concerning the quest of a wife in the disguise of a pilgrim for an erring husband who is a gambler and the protector of a pretty ballet girl; and occasionally some strained portion of the attenuated story recalls the fact that this is a comedy contemporaneous with the artificiality of Marivaux and the studied sarcasm of Voltaire. "In the title

[4] In the published versions of this comedy there are no masks, although when first produced there were, according to its author, several mask characters.

of the comedy," says Goldoni, "I do not introduce a story, a passion, or a character, but merely a coffee-house, where several actions take place simultaneously, whither several people are brought by different interests." "The piece," he continues, "should be read in its entirety before being judged, there being as many character studies as there are persons in the play. Among them is a prattling slanderer who is very original and funny—a plague of humanity who bores the customers of the coffee-house where the scene is laid."

In this ingenuous way, Goldoni refers to Don Marzio, the scandal-monger, one of the most original of his characterizations. An out-at-elbows Neapolitan gentleman stranded in Venice, who passes his time in drinking water at Ridolfo's coffee-house, Don Marzio, at once guileless and artful, is a busybody whose tongue wags constantly and whose ears are strained for gossip which his vivid southern imagination invariably distorts. Like the Marchese di Forlipopoli in *The Mistress of the Inn,* he is an impecunious gentleman trying to keep up appearances, and like him, too, unable to realize that the most inefficient of human creatures is a gentleman with an empty pocket-book. But Forlipopoli loves Mirandolina; whereas Don Marzio loves only the sound of his own mischievous voice. Even when his intentions are the best, he can read only ulterior motives into the innocent remarks he chances to overhear, with the consequence that, whenever his nose is

GOLDONI IN A COFFEE-HOUSE

Collection of Professor Italico Brass

poked into other people's business, his wagging tongue creates mischief. This whimsical old meddler is thus introduced in a conversation with Ridolfo, proprietor of the coffee-house:

RIDOLFO

Here comes one who never stops talking and who always will have it that he is in the right.

DON MARZIO

Coffee.

RIDOLFO

You'll be served immediately.

DON MARZIO

What news is there, Ridolfo?

RIDOLFO

I hardly know, sir.

DON MARZIO

Hasn't anybody turned up here yet?

RIDOLFO

It's still early.

DON MARZIO

Early? Ten o'clock has struck![5]

RIDOLFO

Oh! sir—no; it isn't eight yet.

DON MARZIO

Get out, you fool!

RIDOLFO

I assure you that eight has not yet struck.

DON MARZIO

Get out, you donkey!

RIDOLFO

You abuse me without reason.

[5] Literally, sixteen o'clock, the Venetian day beginning at sunset.

DON MARZIO

I counted the strokes this very moment, and I tell you it is ten o'clock. Moreover, look at my watch! it's never wrong. (*Shows his watch.*)

RIDOLFO

Well, if your watch is never wrong, pray observe that your watch says a quarter to eight.

DON MARZIO

It isn't possible. (*Uses his eye-glass.*)

RIDOLFO

Well, what does your watch say?

DON MARZIO

My watch is keeping poor time. I heard it strike ten.

RIDOLFO

Where did you buy your watch?

DON MARZIO

I had it sent to me from London.

RIDOLFO

They cheated you.

DON MARZIO

Cheated me? How?

RIDOLFO

They sent you a poor watch.

DON MARZIO

Poor! What do you mean? It's one of the best watches Quaré ever made.

RIDOLFO

If it were good it wouldn't be two hours behind the time.

DON MARZIO

It always runs well; it's never behind time.

RIDOLFO

But if it says a quarter to eight, and you say it is ten?

DON MARZIO

My watch runs well, I tell you.

RIDOLFO

Therefore it's about eight o'clock, just as I said.

DON MARZIO

You're an impertinent rascal. My watch runs well, but you talk ill. Take care I don't box your ears.[6]

A waiter finally brings Don Marzio his coffee; his busy tongue wags on. "Tell me, Ridolfo," he asks, regarding the dancer who dwells nearby, "what is that ballet girl doing in this neighbourhood?" "In truth, I know nothing about her," Ridolfo answers; whereupon Don Marzio declares that he has heard she is under the protection of Count Leandro, a slanderous statement waxing so tremendous in his imagination that, when Ridolfo returns a moment later, the old scandalmonger has woven a tale to the effect that she is protected by Count Leandro, who, "instead of spending his money on her, helps himself to all the poor creature earns; and perhaps because of him, she is forced to lead a life she would not otherwise lead."

"But I have never seen any one except Count Leandro enter her house," Ridolfo protests.

"She has a backdoor, you fool," chuckles the old gossip. "There is always an ebb and flow. She has a backdoor, you fool!"

In this way, Don Marzio makes a story out of whole cloth which he retails to any one who will

[6] Act I, Scene 3.

listen. Throughout the play he is flitting about, catching a word here, a look there, which his evil old tongue rolls into a sweet morsel of slander. Moreover, he is cantankerous, and will ever have it that his word is law even when he has not a leg to stand his argument upon. Witness this scene with Count Leandro:

DON MARZIO

Come, let's sit down. What's new in the world's news?

LEANDRO

I take no interest in the news.

DON MARZIO

Do you know that the Russian army has gone into winter quarters?

LEANDRO

They did right. The weather forced them to.

DON MARZIO

No, sir, they did wrong. They should not have abandoned the position they held.

LEANDRO

True. They should have endured the cold rather than lose their conquests.

DON MARZIO

No, sir. They did not have to run the risk of being there at all, with the danger of perishing in the ice.

LEANDRO

Then they should have advanced.

DON MARZIO

No, sir. Oh, what a fine knowledge of war! Advance in the middle of winter!

LEANDRO

Then what should they have done?

DON MARZIO

Let me look at the map and then I'll tell you exactly where they should have gone.

LEANDRO (*Aside.*)

Oh, what a superb fool!

DON MARZIO

Were you at the opera?

LEANDRO

Yes, sir.

DON MARZIO

Did you like it?

LEANDRO

Well enough.

DON MARZIO

You have poor taste.

LEANDRO

Enough!

DON MARZIO

Where are you from?

LEANDRO

Turin.

DON MARZIO

An ugly town.

LEANDRO

On the contrary, it passes for one of the finest in Italy.

DON MARZIO

I am a Neapolitan; see Naples, then die.

LEANDRO

I should give you the Venetian's answer.[7]

DON MARZIO

Have you any snuff?

[7] The Venetian proverb is *Vedi Venezia e poi discorri* (See Venice and then talk).

LEANDRO

Here! (*Opens his snuff-box.*)

DON MARZIO

What atrocious snuff!

LEANDRO

It's good enough for me.

DON MARZIO

You know nothing about it. Rappee is the genuine snuff.

LEANDRO

I like Spanish snuff.

DON MARZIO

Spanish snuff is an abomination.

LEANDRO

And I say it's the best snuff a man can take.

DON MARZIO

What! You presume to tell me what snuff is! I make it, I have it made for me. I buy it here, I buy it there. I know what this is. Rappee, rappee, it must be rappee! (*Shouts loudly.*)

LEANDRO (*Shouting too*).

Yes, sir, rappee, rappee, it's true that rappee is the best snuff.

DON MARZIO

No, sir! Rappee is not always the best snuff; one must discriminate. You don't know what you are talking about.[8]

Don Marzio not only quarrels with every one who opposes him, but he betrays, as well, the secrets of his friends, ruins the characters of women, and delivers fugitives into the hands of the police with a mischievousness so ingenuous that he cannot understand why maledictions are showered upon him by his victims. "They complain of my tongue," he laments; "yet I am sure I speak kindly. It is

[8] Act II, Scene 16.

true I talk occasionally about this one or that one, but believing that I speak the truth, I do not abstain from it. I tell readily what I know, but I do it because I have a kind heart." The unconscious protagonist of a play in which his tongue snarls every knot, this unique portrayal of the evils of gossip is a character worthy a place in the immortal company of Mascarille and Figaro.

Translated into English by Mr. Henry B. Fuller, this comedy was presented by The Drama Players, under the auspices of the Chicago Theatre Society, during the dramatic season of 1912, and received with mild curiosity, not to say indifference, by an American audience; yet in extenuation of this ill success, it may be said that the actors, temperamentally unsuited to their parts, had been insufficiently rehearsed, and that the play had been hurriedly staged without having received the judicious pruning so necessary to a modern revival of old comedy. Although one Chicago critic declared that *"The Coffee-House* will inspire no emotion save that of ennui," while another dismissed it as "artistic fluff," the charm of this quaintly naturalistic comedy was keenly felt by that intrepid champion of dramatic excellence, Mr. James O'Donnell Bennett, of the *Record-Herald,* his critique being so intuitively just to this droll portrayal of the life of Venice in her decadence that it shall be quoted here as a vicarious expression of the present writer's views regarding it:

That quaint fabric of naïveté and sapiency, "The Coffee-House," was enacted, probably for the first time on the English-speaking stage, at the Lyric Theatre last evening before an assemblage that at first seemed to be rubbing its eyes to adjust its vision to a composition that, when you have adjusted yourself to it, is very engaging. When the audience had put itself back into Venice of the mid-eighteenth century, and when it began to sense the kindliness, the homely wisdom, the sweet trustfulness and the soft drollery that distinguish everything the good Carlo Goldoni wrote—then it enjoyed itself. Until then it seemed dissatisfied—wondering perhaps with what relic the Chicago Theatre Society was trying to fool it.

But you cannot long resist "Dr. Goldoni, a Venetian lawyer," as they called him in the early days of his memorable career. . . . He is one of the loves of literature, and it was a genuine pleasure to this reviewer to sit with him last evening and observe him in his kindly, busy, deft, officious, sometimes artless and sometimes very shrewd way, manœuvring the people he knew so thoroughly in that trivial, impetuous, genial Venice of his.

Here came the male babbler, preening and mincing in lace and silk, sipping his coffee in the open, lying in wait for a bit of gossip like a cat for a mouse, putting two and two together and making what he liked out of it, symbolizing—in a different way but just as wonderfully—the "motiveless malignity" of Iago, and epitomizing mischief and malevolence. . . . The character is drawn full length—perfect in every puttering detail, an officious, gloating, eavesdropping babbler who wins for himself in the dénouement the word—of terrifying import in the Venice of 1760—"spy," and who thinks himself so little deserving of that word that he whimpers as the curtain falls: "I have a good heart, but—but—I talk too much!" He is an unforgivable, unforgettable old man, and he was as alive last night as he was one hundred and fifty-two years ago.

Here is that Signor Eugenio, who "pursues women and gambles like a madman"; here the old servant of the father of Eugenio, who has saved his money and opened a coffee-house and declares with honest pride that his is a calling which, when pursued

aright, serves alike the pleasure and the comfort of the town; here the gambler and his gulls; here neglected wives voicing their griefs with the gorgeous virulence characteristic of their race; here the impudent servants who know too much. They are all alive. Babbler, crook, spendthrift, benevolent old man, the acquisitive and the inquisitive—they go busily their ways. Innuendo, protest, impeachment, denial fly through the air. The old servant reconciles the contentious, heartens up the grieving, assists the penniless, tries to implant good sense and right feeling in the soul of even the crooked gambler, reunites estranged husbands and wives, brings everything to a happy issue for everybody,—except the mean scandalmonger. Him the sunny Carlo cannot forgive, and at the end he sends him trailing across a deserted stage, the hateful word "spy"—informer would perhaps convey the meaning better—ringing in his ears.

The mechanism of it has occasionally been so obvious that in these knowing days a child could run it. Sometimes the movement has been forced and tame. But the human nature of it is valid. We know that these people existed, that they hurried and idled and gossiped and quarrelled in yonder sunlit square, irascible, volatile, weak, venomous, distracted. They rejoiced. They suffered. They lived.

The satire of *The Coffee-House* was not directed solely against scandal, the evils of gambling being also brought under its stinging lash. Eugenio, the young merchant, losing his patrimony at cards and pawning his wife's jewels, is a powerful sermon against this vice, while Pandolfo, the gambler, is a faithfully drawn character, who meets his moral deserts by his delivery into the hands of justice through the blabbing of Don Marzio. The arrest of a gambler would have been an anomaly in Venice a few years previously, yet a moral revulsion had swept over that pleasure-loving town—one of those

sporadic crusades against vice such as obtain in American cities. Games of chance had been declared illegal, the gambling tables of the Ridotto had been suppressed; to quote Goldoni: "Even the members of the Great Council who were fond of gambling had voted in favour of the new law," the powers that were in Venice being apparently not so oligarchically entrenched that they might scorn vote-winning politics. It was an opportune moment for a play directed against the evils of gaming, so opportune, in fact, that, with a practical dramatist's eye ever upon the public taste, Goldoni launched a few months later another dramatic missile against the card-sharpers of Venice; but *The Gambler* (*Il Giuocatore*), as this new play was called, in the words of its author, "failed hopelessly," because the episodic gamester of *The Coffee-House* surpassed the one who was the subject of a play—another evidence of the futility of literary repetition.[9]

Although the clement protagonist of *The Father of a Family* (*Il Padre di famiglia*) called Pancrazio, wears small clothes instead of long, red trousers, and a periwig in lieu of a mask, he is, however, a merchant of Venice, and therefore Pantalone's ectype. In spite of his paternal affection, he is still somewhat of a prig, and less human by far than Beatrice, his second wife, or Ottavio, the dissipated tutor who leads the younger of his charges into vile ways, and bullies the elder, Pancrazio's child by his

[9] The evils of gaming are also set forth in *La Buona moglie.*

first wife. "I had seen in society complacent mothers," says Goldoni, "unjust step-mothers, spoiled children, and dangerous teachers, so I assembled these different objects in a single picture, portraying in a sprightly way, by means of a wise and prudent father, the correction of vice and the example of virtue." In valuing his plays "according to his own feelings," he would, he adds, "say much in favour of *The Father of a Family.*" The adverse decision of the public forced him, however, to place it in the second rank—an unconscious tribute to the public's acumen, for, although this play has been translated into several languages, including English, and has been included in more than one selected edition of the comedies, its smugness and its lachrymose plot should keep it confined to the rank in which the Venetian public placed it.

In *The Obedient Daughter* (*La Figlia obbediente*), Pantalone plays the rôle of an obdurate father, who forces his daughter to bend to his will. But her lover is not so supine. Threatening to kill the rich old count whom Pantalone has chosen for her husband, he so thoroughly frightens him that he jilts her, while consoling himself with a ballet-dancer. Olivetta, this lady of the *coulisses,* Brighella, her complaisant father, and Count Ottavio, her rich admirer, are three characters whose drolleries form a sprightly sub-comedy, although, as the author says, "the principal story is not very interesting because lacking in suspense."

To find in the minor characters of Goldoni's duller comedies bright flashes of his genius is no uncommon thing; yet in none are they more ludicrously true to life than in *The Obedient Daughter,* Brighella, the ex-valet, who acclaims the presents made his daughter as tributes to her art, and who forces his former fellow-servant, Arlecchino, to address him as Excellency, being a character as droll as Captain Costigan or Monsieur Cardinal, both of whom he resembles. Ostensibly blind to his daughter's lapses, he vaunts her terpsichorean triumphs, while selling for his own benefit the sweetmeats she does not consume and accepting tips from English lords and German princes. When she washes her hands in an ordinary bowl, he begs her to repeat the ablution in a silver basin, while in her interviews with titled men he assists her with all the self-importance he can assume; yet all the while he is unable to disguise the fact that before she became a "star" he was an upper-servant.

This humorous sidelight shed on theatrical life in an otherwise bourgeois comedy tempts one to wander for a moment away from Pantalone's straitlaced household to the green-room itself, for in *The Manager from Smyrna* (*L'Impresario delle Smirne*), Goldoni presents a more complete and even more satirical picture of stage folk. The manager in question is a Turkish merchant who, coming to Venice on business, is so delighted with the opera that he resolves to take a troupe back to Smyrna, his

native town, the poor Turk, whose knowledge of women is confined to the odalisques of his harem, being soon pestered to distraction by *prime donne* seeking engagements, each as pretentious and self-centred as the most pampered of modern stage divinities. Although each is accompanied by a retinue of old women, brothers, kinsfolk, birds in cages, dogs, poll-parrots, and doddering admirers, these artists of little merit have such a meagre repertory that a poetaster, armed with the complete works of Metastasio and Zeno, is obliged to give assurance that, with the aid of a rhyming dictionary, he can write new words to fit the hackneyed tunes which have cracked their voices. Indeed, so insufferable do the trials of the amateur manager become that he flees in desperation from the tempers of the *prime donne* to the peace of his harem at Smyrna; after having entrusted an agent with the task of giving the artists a quarter of their promised salary, "instead of the insults they merit."

But mention of *The Manager from Smyrna* here is a distinct digression, bourgeois Pantalone being no *habitué des coulisses*. On the contrary, as the staid father of a respectable family, he was often at his wits' end in keeping in leash some badly behaved son, such as Lelio, whose escapades give subject to *The Liar* (*Il Bugiardo*), a play founded, as the author frankly confesses, on Corneille's comedy of similar name (*Le Menteur*). Here Goldoni follows in the footsteps not only of the author of *The*

Cid but of Alarcon as well; still the sprightly adventures into which a young liar's glib tongue leads him are told with certain novel touches which Voltaire thus describes: [10]

> There are in Goldoni two very amusing elements; the first is a rival of the liar, who, in repeating as the truth all the falsehoods the liar has told him, is himself taken for a liar; while the second is a valet, who, wishing to emulate his master, plunges into ridiculous lies from which he cannot extricate himself.

Voltaire adds, however, that Goldoni's liar is less noble than Corneille's, although, as a matter of fact, he is a far more consistent person than his French prototype, Goldoni's fidelity to nature being apparent even in this borrowed comedy. Lelio may be odious—as indeed a liar ought to be—yet he is consistently a bourgeois. Even when masquerading as a nobleman, he would never have convinced a man to the manner born that he was of noble birth, whereas Corneille's Dorante, though a bourgeois too, neither talks nor acts like one at any time; a nicety of characterization on Goldoni's part which Voltaire overlooked.

The Merchants (*I Mercanti*) is still another play in which Pantalone has a wayward son who dissipates his father's wealth, but in this instance the prodigal's reclamation is brought about by the tact and patience of his sweetheart, Giannina, a girl Goldoni rightly calls "very well educated and very sen-

[10] *Commentaire sur Corneille.*

sible." [11] But if Pantalone often had trouble with his sons, the rearing of his children of the weaker sex was sometimes a problem as well, especially if they happened to be two marriageable daughters, one a capricious miss never twice of the same mind, and the other an ingenuous little fool.

This is his predicament in *The Fickle Woman* (*La Donna volubile*), a play written to satirize an actress in Medebac's company, who, according to the author, was "the most capricious woman in the world." [12] This weathercock in petticoats is punished in a manner befitting her flightiness, since, when she has finally made up her mind to marry, none of her admirers will have her. Her father, Pantalone, is wealthy, and his wealth has turned the fickle lady's head. Had her mother been alive, and she obliged to help in the work of the household instead of being attended by two maids whom she browbeats, inconstant Rosaura would have been better behaved and better mannered, money being decidedly at the root of her evil disposition.

A far more tractable daughter of Pantalone is to be met in *The Misadventure;* or *The Imprudent*

[11] *I Mercanti,* written to give Collalto a dual rôle, was originally called *I Due pantaloni,* the two Pantaloons being father and son and both of them merchants. Owing to the difficulty of finding an actor capable of playing both rôles successfully, Goldoni rewrote the play and entitled it *I Mercanti,* Pantalone's name being changed to Pancrazio, his son's to Giacinto.

[12] *La Donna vendicativa,* a comedy of bald intrigue in which the wiles of a scheming maid servant are set forth, was also written to satirize an actress, Corallina, the lady in question "having vowed eternal hatred" against Goldoni when he forswore her charms.

Babbler (*Il Contrattempo, o sia il Chiacchierone imprudente*), a comedy concerning the misfortunes of a well-intentioned young man with a wagging tongue. Yet the daughter in question, who plays with a doll and knows not the meaning of the word husband, is incredibly guileless for a young woman of eighteen even if convent bred, though doubtless she was designed as a model for the young girls of Venice to emulate.

The most sprightly of Goldoni's comedies of the Venetian bourgeoisie is *The Inquisitive Women* (*Le Donne curiose*) the scene of which was ascribed to Bologna because it satirized freemasonry, an alien institution, condemned by the Jesuits and anathematized by the Pope; yet, to its author's liberal mind, harmless alike to religion and morality. Two Englishmen, whom he knew, had instituted a masonic lodge in Venice, of which he was perhaps a member, although it seems more likely that he merely saw in the outcry against freemasonry a subject for a spirited comedy of popular appeal. At all events, *The Inquisitive Women,* although noteworthy as the only play in which he has the temerity to make dramatic use of a political question, is so delightfully innocent in its satire that even the tyrannical Council of Ten could with difficulty have discerned in it a menace to either the Church or the State.

"Under a well hidden, well disguised title," says Goldoni, "this play represents a lodge of freemasons, Pantalone, a Venetian merchant, being at the

head of a society of persons of his own state which meets in a small rented house to dine, sup, talk business, or discuss the news of the day." In other words this masonic lodge is merely a club, frequented, like modern clubs, by men of congenial tastes in search of relaxation, its only secret ordinance being the exclusion of women from a share in its innocent pleasures. Yet the fact that they are denied admission to this club so whets the feminine curiosity of the wives and sweethearts of its members that they plot a way to penetrate its sacred precincts, in order to discover whether their lords and lovers spend their time there in gambling, in searching for the philosopher's stone, or in entertaining women of questionable character. Possessing themselves by trickery of the keys of the club-house, these inquisitive women, abetted by Corallina, a maid, succeed in bribing Pantalone's servant, Brighella, to hide them in a closet while the club is in session, only to learn that "Friendship" is its watchword, and its sole secret rite the enjoyment of a delicious supper. Because of the inability of these prying women to hold their tongues while in their hiding place, their eavesdropping is discovered; whereupon Brighella, in extenuation of his treachery, declares that he admitted them to the club for the commendable purpose of convincing them of its harmlessness, the result being, so says Goldoni, "that the men are not angry to find their wives undeceived and themselves in a position to enjoy their innocent pleasures."

The dramatic texture of *The Inquisitive Women* is flimsy, yet so deftly is it draped upon its slender framework of a single idea that this comedy is entitled to far higher rank than many for which its author built a more elaborate scaffolding. So much does its interest depend upon its mirthful dialogue, however, that it is easy to agree with Mr. Richard Aldrich, the distinguished musical critic of the New York *Times,* in believing that this lively comedy does not cry aloud for musical illustration. Yet, as this writer declares, "Wolf-Ferrari has made it into a lyric drama with a skill and originality, with a command of the comic expressions of music, that are rare to-day." [13] Human nature is a better basis, however, than an artificial plot whether for an opera or for a play, a fact that explains the undoubted charm of *The Inquisitive Women,* the entire argument of which is constructed upon the desire of a few over-curious wives and sweethearts to find out what their husbands and lovers are doing behind closed doors. Yet feminine as is their curiosity, these women of Goldoni's day absolutely represent, to quote Signor Ernesto Masi,[14] "society endeavouring to divine in a thousand ways the mystery of those masonic meetings, which Pope Corsini with the bull *In eminenti* of April 28th, 1738, had solemnly condemned."

[13] *Le Donne curiose,* an opera founded on Goldoni's comedy of the same name (music by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari, text by Luigi Sugana), produced in Munich 1903 and at the Metropolitan Opera-House, New York, 1912.

[14] *Scelta di commedie di Carlo Goldoni.*

Freemasonry having long ceased to be a menace to society—at least in Anglo-Saxon countries—the interest in this play now lies in its sprightly plot and faithful characterization, as well as in the homely sayings of Ottavio, a phlegmatic, easy-going philosopher, who, as Signor Masi hints, may have been Goldoni himself translated to the stage. Although the sapient words of this character are many, there is space here only for this single speech, uttered when Flaminio, a young lover, complains of the fickleness of Ottavio's daughter:

My dear friend, my daughter is only a woman like the rest. She will have good moments and bad moments. Treat her like the weather. Enjoy the calm, fly from the thunder, and when a storm comes, retire and wait until the sun comes out.

Another passage worthy of translation is the constitution of Goldoni's pseudo-Masonic lodge, which is read to a candidate seeking admission, while the inquisitive women listen in their hiding place, a document so commendable that it shall be given in full, in the hope that some club of the present day may adopt it:

Article 1. No one shall be admitted to membership who is not upright, civil, and well-mannered.

Article 2. Each member may amuse himself as he will in ways lawful, honest, virtuous, and of worthy example.

Article 3. Members shall dine and sup together, but soberly and moderately, and any one drinking to excess or becoming intoxicated, will for the first offence be condemned to pay for the dinner or supper given on that occasion, and for the second expelled from membership.

Article 4. Each member shall contribute one *scudo* toward the maintenance of necessary things, such as furniture, lights, service, books, paper, etc.

Article 5. The admission of women is forever forbidden, in order that scandals, dissensions, jealousies, and similar matters shall not arise.

Article 6. Surplus money not used for expenses shall be deposited in a coffer for the relief of some worthy poor man.

Article 7. Should any member suffer misfortune, without loss of honour, he shall be assisted by the others and defended with fraternal love.

Article 8. A member committing any crime or unworthy act shall be expelled.

Article 9. In order that all ceremonies, compliments, and affectations may be banished, any one wishing to leave may go, any one wishing to remain may stay, and there shall be no other salutation or compliment than "Friendship, friendship."

Although Pantalone figures in *The Inquisitive Women,* his part is slight. Still, one of his apothegms bears repetition: "It is not birth," he says, "that makes a gentleman, but good deeds." This shrewd merchant is manifestly out of place in a masonic lodge, yet nowhere does he seem so ill at ease as in *The Unknown* (*L'Incognita*), a play of which the scene is laid near Naples. Far from his native Venice, he appears awkwardly here as the father of a lovesick son, enamoured of a persecuted maiden whose adventures entail a plot so complicated and unreal that it is difficult to believe Goldoni is its author.

In *The Lovers* (*Gli Innamorati*), Pantalone plays no part, the family to which we are here introduced being of the *haute bourgeoisie* and no longer in trade.

The story unfolded in this comedy is one of endearments, suspicions, quarrels, and reconciliations, told according to the conventional formula: the lovers in this instance were drawn from life, however, their originals being Maddalena Poloni, the daughter of Goldoni's Roman landlord, and Bartolommeo Pinto, her betrothed, in whose wavering love-affair our dramatist had assisted as confidant during his residence in Rome. Whether or not Fabrizio, the head of the bourgeois household here presented, is a portrait of his worthy Roman host, Pietro Poloni, Goldoni does not inform us, yet he is a lifelike portrayal of a tuft-hunting parvenu, who, to impress his guests with his social importance, talks of the grand people he knows. To curry favour with important people this wealthy upstart offers to lend them his cook, his atlas, and even his collection of old masters; yet although the latter are spurious, he is no such credulous gull as the unwitting collector of false antiques who gives name to *The Antiquarian's Family* (*La Famiglia dell' antiquario*).

Impoverished by his passion for antiques, Count Anselmo, the protagonist of this latter comedy, is just the sort of dupe to whom the modern picture sharp sells his Corots, the cheat in this case being his own servant, Brighella, a rogue who induces his fellow-townsman Arlecchino to play the rôle of an Armenian archæologist and palm off on his master an old kitchen lamp as "an eternal light from the tomb of Bartholomew," and a leaf from a book of modern

Greek love-songs as "a treaty of peace between Athens and Sparta penned by Demosthenes' own hand." The whims of this would-be antiquarian, whom even an expert's opinion that his collection is rubbish cannot cure of his mania, form, however, only the atmospheric background for a comedy on the perennial mother-in-law problem, Goldoni's sub-title—*The Mother-in-Law and the Daughter-in-Law* (*La Suocera e la nuora*)—describing the action more accurately than *The Antiquarian's Family,* this particular antiquarian's household being dominated by his wife until Doralice, his son's wife, takes the domestic bit in her mouth.

When Count Anselmo has spent the last paolo of her dowry on spurious relics, Doralice, rebelling against the snubs inflicted upon her by her mother-in-law because of her plebeian birth, robs the latter of one of her truculent cicisbei and insults her into the bargain; whereupon Pantalone, this trouble-maker's father, and a wholly sensible man of affairs as well, quietly gathers the domestic reins into his own hands. Inducing Count Anselmo to make him the assignee of his bankrupt estate, Pantalone holds the purse-strings and is able thereby to force the warring women to hold their tongues. Making the antiquarian an allowance of one hundred *scudi* per annum to squander on false antiques, he dismisses a talebearing housemaid, consigns the elder termagant to the upper and the younger to the lower floor of the house, and remarks as the curtain falls

that "if they do not see each other or talk to each other, quiet may perhaps obtain, this being the only way a mother-in-law and daughter-in-law can live together in harmony." Yet, as Goldoni says, in commenting upon the complete reconciliation made to take place between them by a French adapter of this play, there can be "no assurance that on the morrow the disputes of these two vixens will not break forth anew."

Quarrelsome little Doralice is wholly unlike gentle Rosaura of *The Sensible Wife,* another daughter of Pantalone wedded to a nobleman's son; yet she is no more vixenish or vulgar than her mother-in-law, who, despite her superior birth, is quite as ill-bred as this daughter-in-law whose ignoble birth has tarnished a proud name. Indeed, although Count Anselmo is nobly born, the behaviour of his family is essentially bourgeois, and the same may be said of the noble family in *Domestic Bickerings* (*I Puntigli domestici*) the theme of which is the servant question: a topic apparently as rife in Goldoni's day as in our own, since, in speaking of this play, he says it was inspired by several families he had seen to be "the dupes of their attachment for their servants." In both *The Antiquarian's Family* and *Domestic Bickerings,* two families, living under the same roof, quarrel and listen to the tales their servants bear; in both the titles of count and countess are borne by certain characters, and in each, it may be added, the truth of Baretti's aspersion is manifest, Goldoni's princesses talk-

ing like ladies' maids. Hence these families, though noble in name, are bourgeois in manner.

Another comedy of the upper bourgeoisie is *The Fanatic Poet* (*Il Poeta fanatico*), a play in which our dramatist ridicules the poetic arrogance of a wealthy burgher he had known, while satirizing mildly as well the euphuistic pretensions of the Arcadian Academies. Every one in the household of Ottavio, the fanatic in question, even to Brighella, his servant, is encouraged to spout verse, Beatrice, his second wife, alone being free from this besetting folly; yet *The Fanatic Poet* is a skit rather than a play, and is, as its author declares frankly, "one of his most feeble comedies." Furthermore, honest Pantalone plays no part therein, therefore it does not truly typify his Venice.

Accustomed, as he was, to haggling in the marts of trade, this worthy citizen could hardly abstain from recourse to the law; hence he was often either plaintiff or defendant. Moreover, Goldoni was himself a lawyer, so that the law naturally plays a part in many of his comedies. Unlike Molière, who had studied law but had not practised it, Goldoni treated the profession seriously; often portraying wicked lawyers, as in *The Cavalier and the Lady*, where a thieving solicitor despoils a poor woman for his own benefit, and in *Domestic Bickerings*, where another conscienceless man of law thrives on the difficulties of a warring family. Again, in *The Impostor*, there is an attorney, who shows a client how he may outwit

his creditors; while in *The Lucky Heiress,* a singular will leaves another lawyer heir to his brother's estate in case the latter's daughter does not marry his former partner. Yet unscrupulous as are the intrigues of this Tartuffe of the robe, he is outwitted by a valet and loses the inheritance. In *The Prudent Man,* Pantalone appears as his own lawyer to defend his wife against the charge of having attempted to poison him, a case Goldoni declares to have come under his own observation when practising law at Pisa; while in *The Clever Woman,* Rosaura the heroine, in order to make her lover fulfil his promise of marriage, pleads her own cause in legal phrases worthy a doctor of Padua.

Yet howsoever severely he may have scored the evil practices of his profession in these plays, Goldoni makes full atonement in *The Venetian Advocate* (*L'Avvocato veneziano*), an apotheosis of the law in which the hero, a Venetian lawyer, falls in love with his client's opponent, yet remains true to his professional honour. By winning the lawsuit, he reduces his sweetheart to penury, but gallantly amends the wrong by offering her his hand and fortune. When Florindo, his friend and client, discovering his passion, offers to pay his fee and permit him to withdraw from the case, Alberto, this lawyer, thus indignantly answers him:

Sior Florindo, I have let you talk. I have let you fulminate without defending myself. Now that you have finished, I shall speak briefly. That humanity is frail I do not deny; that a wise

and prudent man may fall in love, I grant; but for a man of honour to permit himself to be carried away by a blind passion to the prejudice of his dignity and self-esteem is harder than you believe, and if in the matter at hand there are bad examples, Alberto is not capable of following them. The doubt you demonstrate regarding my honesty and faith is to me a grave offence, but I am not in a position to show resentment, because my resentment might in that instance substantiate your words. I am here to defend your case, I am here to conduct it. I shall conduct it because my honour is involved, not for the vile advantage you have brutally and unreasonably had the audacity to offer me. You will see with what ardour, heart, and spirit I shall defend you. You will know then who I am; you will repent of having offended me with unworthy suspicions, and you will learn to think better of honest men and honourable advocates.

Although this Venetian barrister opposes the pedantic written pleadings of a Bolognese doctor with arguments elegantly and easily extemporized in his mellifluent native speech, he is not a lawyer, but rather a mouthpiece for his author, who declares with his habitual naïveté that his professional brethren, "accustomed to seeing the robe made ridiculous in the old improvised comedies," were satisfied with "the honourable manner in which he had presented it." "Yet evil persons were not lacking to envenom his intentions," he adds bitterly, there being one among them "who cried aloud that it was in reality a criticism of the lawyers," and that he had presented an incorruptible lawyer "in order to heighten by contrast the weakness and avidity of a host of others."

If, in *The Venetian Advocate*, Goldoni portrayed a lawyer such as he would have liked to be, in *The*

Honest Adventurer (*L'Avventuriere onorato*), he depicted, as he openly avowed, a hero with many of his own characteristics, the rolling stone who gave name to this play having been like his author a lawyer, a doctor, a court official, secretary, consul, and dramatic poet. Here the likeness ceases, for, although Goldoni had had a few honourless love-affairs, he was certainly a better fellow than this adventurer, whose "honesty" consisted in telling a girl who loved him that, although he preferred another, he would marry her—a promise kept only until a rich widow had paid for the breach of it.

Still the escapades of this adventurer of doubtful honesty are more entertaining by far than the bourgeois sermons Goldoni was in the habit of preaching from time to time. *The Good Family* (*La Buona famiglia*), for instance, he calls "a moral play, useful to society," which was "applauded by sensible persons, worthy couples, wise fathers, and prudent mothers"; yet it proved to be so tiresome that, to quote its author once more, "it had no luck upon the stage." *The Fond Mother* (*La Madre amorosa*), too, a piece in which a mother sacrifices herself for her daughter's happiness, though suggestive in theme of Maurice Donnay's admirable modern play, *L'Autre danger,* is but another fustian sermon best passed in silence. Indeed, Goldoni's *tragédies bourgeoises,* as his French contemporaries styled plays of this stilted nature, when without Pantalone's honest personality, are but lachrymose comedies savouring of Diderot, come-

dies more magniloquent than human, in the penning of which our dramatist forswore his genius.

To return to Pantalone's strait-laced household is indeed a relief. Here, at least, likable human beings are met with, though often they are over-sentimentalized, as in *The Devoted Servant* (*La Serva amorosa*), a play wherein the son of a merchant of Venice is driven from the parental hearth by a step-mother's intrigues on behalf of her own offspring,[15] the crucial situation, in which Corallina, the house-maid, disguised as a notary's clerk, induces the merchant to feign death and learn that his second wife has married him only through self-interest, being taken bodily from Molière. In *The Clever Lady's Maid* (*La Cameriera brillante*), a more traditional soubrette is the protagonist. Here Pantalone appears as a close-fisted old widower who forbids his house to the admirers of his daughters, Argentina, the vivacious, resourceful, yet unscrupulous soubrette of French classical comedy, who gives this play its name, being the real mistress of his household since, through her wiles, the old merchant suffers not only the loss of his daughters, but of their dowries as well.

In *The Housekeeper* (*La Castalda*), the hand and fortune of Pantalone, again a rich widower, is the prize for the attainment of which an intriguing menial sharpens her wits. In this play Pantalone's daughters are married, and with his niece Rosaura to cheer him with her pretty presence, he would have

[15] A situation almost identical with this occurs in *Il Padre di famiglia.*

passed his remaining days in comfort at his luxurious villa on the Brenta, had the minx not been bent upon winning a dowry, as well as her rich uncle's permission to wed handsome Florindo, the lover of her choice.

Rosaura, however, is not alone in her designs upon Pantalone's wealth. Beatrice, a widow of the neighbourhood, comes to his fine house attended by Lelio, a fop, the one with a cap set for the uncle, the other avowedly to wed the niece. But these fortune-hunters meet their match in Corallina, the housekeeper, an artful female, who having fully made up her mind to wed Pantalone herself, will brook no interference in her plans. To be sure, she is loved by honest Frangiotto, Pantalone's *maître d'hôtel,* and has a liking for the lad, but she is no Mirandolina, content to wed in her station. Indeed, she is not even an honest housekeeper, since she feeds Arlecchino and his impoverished master on the fat of her employer's table and gives them his best wine to drink.

Having no real liking for his villa, or the fashionable friends of his niece, poor Pantalone fain would pass his evenings dozing in his armchair with his comfortable red slippers on his weary old feet. Longing for the days when his fat wife Eufemia sat beside him, he pictures himself once more in a quiet corner of his beloved Venice, while in his dreams a good wife still knits at his elbow. As his dear Eufemia is dead, why not another, and who can cheer his declining years better, he asks himself, than Co-

rallina, his housekeeper, who knows his whims and is devotedly attached to him? Without more ado he asks her to marry him, but Corallina is a clever hussy. Knowing the widow Beatrice also has designs upon her master and that his niece must be propitiated, Corallina keeps the old dotard on tenter-hooks while manœuvring to make her triumph more complete. In the meantime she thus soliloquizes:

> So he is willing to marry me! If that is so, I will see that he does it perfectly, and if I am to become the mistress of the house, I will hereafter mend my ways. No longer will I deal generously with everybody. In this house swindlers shall have no further luck.

This threat is fulfilled, for, when hungry Arlecchino and his out-at-elbows master come again to whiff the succulent odours of her kitchen, Corallina slams the door in their faces. By making Pantalone believe she is necessary to his comfort and by threatening to leave his house if he marries any one else, she forces him to declare his readiness to marry her, with the artful widow Beatrice as a witness; while into niece Rosaura's good graces she worms herself by assisting her in a scheme to obtain her uncle's reluctant consent to her marriage with Florindo.[16] Thus all obstacles to Corallina's own designs are swept away. Having been, as she says, "a faithful servant," she will perhaps make Pantalone "a discreet wife" whom "he will not repent of having hon-

[16] A scene wherein Rosaura and Corallina change places, the mistress playing the housekeeper and the housekeeper the mistress, in a manner suggestive of Marivaux's *Le Jeu de l'amour et du hazard.*

oured with his hand"; still it is hard not to pity the old fellow, once a power in the marts of Venice, now the prey of a designing hussy.

Wearing the black skull-cap and flowing robe, the long trousers and pointed slippers of his forefathers, and guarding his ducats as sedulously as they, Pantalone ever follows devotedly in their footsteps, though his children blush for his antecedents. Fain would he plant the lioned banner of St. Mark wherever the Turk, the Hungarian, the Greek, or the Genoese has the temerity to oppose his beloved Venice, but, like her, he is decrepit. His son is a spendthrift, his daughters are perfumed *zentildonne* with cicisbei at their beck and call. It is perhaps better that he should pass his old age in his villa on the Brenta, with Corallina his housekeeper-wife to nurse him and safeguard his strong box, than that the new-fangled ways of his children should break his conservative old heart.

X

COMEDIES IN THE VENETIAN DIALECT

"THERE is a considerable number of Venetian Plays in my Collection," says Goldoni in his memoirs, "and perhaps it is these that do me the greatest honour." In this terse sentence he summarizes his dramatic work. These Venetian Plays not only do him the greatest honour, but they distinguish him as the pioneer naturalist in the drama of the world;—the pioneer poet of a people, too, no previous dramatist having painted the life of the streets in colours so truthful nor voiced plebeian sentiments upon the stage by faithfully drawn characters of the proletariat, neither clownish nor obscene.

Molière was the first dramatic realist, and his characters were in a large degree taken from life, but the few peasants in his plays are clowns, and even his middle-class characters are not actually translated from life to the stage, like many of Goldoni's. Moreover, their sentiments are sometimes so tempered by their author's avowed purpose to paint "ridiculous likenesses" of the vices of his times, that occasionally they become thematic. Having no thesis to hold, and no purpose to fulfil except "not to spoil nature," Gol-

doni presented life as it appeared to him. He spoiled nature, however, whenever he transplanted some exotic story to his native soil, or sought to emulate Molière. Only when he painted the life of Venice did he become Venice's *Gran Goldoni,* in whose heart throbbed the sentiments of her people. Many of his comedies written in Tuscan present Venetian life, and in a majority of these, Pantalone speaks the Venetian dialect; yet when he discards the Tuscan language and the conventional characters of the Improvised Comedy entirely for the soft speech of Venice, and the characters he met daily in the tortuous maze of her busy streets, he becomes more truly the poet of her people.

Although, at the time when he was the dramatist of Imer's troupe, he wrote a few scenarî in which the characters spoke Venetian, the first of his Venetian plays that truly does him honour is *The Respectable Girl* (*La Putta onorata*), a comedy with a daughter of the people as its heroine, produced during his first season in Venice as Medebac's playwright. "I had seen at the San Luca Theatre," he says, "a piece called *The Girls of the Castle Quarter* (*Le Putte di Castello*), a popular comedy, the principal character of which was a Venetian girl without talents, morals, or address, and I gave one in the same style, but decent and instructive, which I called *The Respectable Girl.*" "In some of the scenes of this comedy," he continues, "I painted the Venetian gondoliers from nature in a manner exceedingly entertaining to those

acquainted with the language and customs of my country," and as the gondoliers of Venice were allowed places in the theatre when the pit was not crowded, "they were delighted," he adds, "to see themselves put upon the stage, and I became their friend."

In *The Clever Woman* he had presented a girl of the people as his heroine; but she does not talk the language of the people, while her conventional actions are lachrymose. Bettina, his "respectable girl," however, is truly of the streets of Venice, a natural character, who, to quote her author, is "new, agreeable, and national,"—a little laundress, who, knowing the pitfalls of a wicked city, knits prudently upon her balcony, rather than risk her virtue in the enticing street below. When she goes to the parish church to be shriven, her shawl is drawn discreetly over her glossy hair; though little white-stockinged feet gleam coquettishly above her sandals, the ardency of her dark eyes is hidden in the demureness of her downward glance. Even Pasqualino, the gondolier's son whom she loves, may not attend her abroad, nor pay his court to her unaccompanied. "When people are in love," she tells him, "they should not expose themselves to the temptation of being alone. It is true that a girl may repair her fault by marriage, but she will be pointed at none the less. 'There,' they will say, 'is the one who eloped with a lover.'" Though her southern blood flows warmly, Bettina knows well the perils that surround her, for when Pasqualino's fa-

ther, good Menego Cainello, the gondolier, reproaches her for being engaged to his son without his knowledge, she answers him in these sophisticated words:

We poor girls try to marry honestly. If a young man seeks our company and wants us for his wife, we are not obliged to ask him first if his father will be pleased. Congratulate yourself, Master Menego, that you have to deal with a respectable girl, for another in my place might have favoured you with a grandson before you had a daughter-in-law.

When the Marchese di Ripa Verde, a married rake, is introduced surreptitiously into her chamber by her trickish sister, Bettina spurns him in these patriotic words:

And you have a wife, and you come into the house of an honest girl! Who do you think I am? Some light-o'-love? We are in Venice, I'd have you know. In Venice there is pleasure for all who seek it; but to find it, you must go to the haunts by the Piazza; you must go where the shutters are, and the cushions are on the balconies, or straight to the houses of those who stand in their doorways; but in decent Venetian homes you cannot knock at girls' doors so easily. When you foreigners, away from Venice, talk about her women, you make one nosegay of them all; but by the blood of Our Lady you are wrong. The girls of respectable families in this land have good sense, and they live in a stricter way, perhaps, than is to be found in any other place. Venetian girls are charming; but as to their virtues I agree with the one who says:

Girls of Venice are a treasure,
  Difficult to win indeed:
True as gold in fullest measure;
  None their hearts will e'er mislead.
Rome vaunts the glory of Lucretia:
Yet virtue's found in our Venetia.

Bettina's story is conventional. A band of ruffians bribed by the Marchese di Ripa Verde carry her off by force to his house, where his pleasure-loving wife is so touched by her sincerity that she helps her to evade her wicked lord's clutches by exchanging clothes with her, an artifice that enables Bettina, once safe of the marchese's house, to escape in the carnival crowd; the rake's wife being caught by him and carried to his chamber under the impression that she is his inamorata. Bettina has a protector in the person of Pantalone, a rich merchant who reveres her, and would like to marry her, a desire in which he is balked, however, by Pasqualino. This listless young spark, beloved by Bettina, turns out to be Pantalone's own child: the wife of Menego, the gondolier, in order that her own son may inherit Pantalone's ducats, having in the manner of Gilbert's dear little Buttercup, "mixed two babies up."

Although her story is trite, Bettina is no prude, but rather a tender, simple girl of the people, whose virtue is inspired by a worldly wisdom acquired in the rough school of experience. Knowing the world, and not ashamed of her knowledge; preferring the simple betrothal ring of her Pasqualino to the diamonds of the scented rake she scorns, this sturdy blond girl of the streets is a child of nature, grown to fine womanhood in the free air of Venice;—in short, the heroine of a people, and not of an aristocracy or of a bourgeoisie, such as all stage heroines before her had been. Moreover, throughout this play a note of patriotism

sounds lustily, as in these stirring words uttered by Menego, the gondolier, to Pasqualino, his supposed son, who being of bourgeois blood, proves the immutability of inheritance by preferring scrivening to the oar:

> Glad would I be to see thee at work, could I see thee standing on a gondola's poop; could I see thee at a regular ferry, or in the service of some good master, following the calling of thy father, thy grandfather, and thy entire family. What! dost thou think, thou chit of a coxcomb, that the calling of a gondolier is not honourable and respectable? Thou young donkey! In this country we boatmen constitute a body of men, the like of which is not to be found elsewhere in the world. We serve, it is true, but ours is a noble service that does not soil the hands. We are the most confidential secretaries of our masters, and no danger is there of secrets leaking from our lips. We are better paid than others, we maintain our families respectably; we have credit with the tradesfolk; we are models of fidelity; we are famous for our quips, and the readiness of our wit; above all, we are so loyal and so warmly attached to our country that we would shed our blood for her, and fight the entire world, if we heard our Venice slandered, for she is the queen of the sea.

The Respectable Girl is an epic of the streets. The wonder is that Goldoni should have written it at a time when the nobles in his theatre spat at will from their boxes upon the plebeians in the pit below; when the people were only a herd of hewers of wood and drawers of water, "on their feet when their betters sat, at work when their betters slept,"—a common herd of lackeys, porters, serving-maids, fishermen, weavers, artisans, butchers, bakers, candlestick-makers, or what not, who were the butts of comedy till he

made them its heroes and heroines. Yet this industrious, gracious, spontaneous, humour-loving, pleasure-loving herd were all sons and daughters of free Venice, proud of her traditions and still believing in her indomitable strength. Their excellence is apotheosized in the person of golden-haired Bettina, their inflammable, ironical nature is revealed in the following scene where, two gondolas having collided in a narrow canal, their gondoliers thus revile each other:

NANE

Back water, so that I may go ahead.

MENEGO

I be going ahead, too; back water a couple of strokes, thus may we all pass.

NANE

I back water! Back water thyself; thou are headed down stream.

MENEGO

I have a load aboard, brother; I cannot do it.

NANE

I'll not budge either. I have three passengers aboard.

MENEGO

If thou hast three, I have five.

NANE

Five or six, it is your place to make way for me.

MENEGO

Who says it is my place to move? Thy skull is cracked. Canst thou not see that should I back I'll have fifty boats beneath my stern; and I must get through to the canal. Thou hast but three boats to avoid. Clear the way.

NANE

Come, Master Menego, make not a fool of thyself.

MENEGO

Wouldst thou teach me?—me, who have been rowing in the regattas these twenty years?

NANE

Even though thou dost row in the regattas, I know my calling, and I be telling thee it is thy place to back water.

MENEGO

Out of the way; shut thy mouth!

NANE

If thou wert not an older man than I, I'd shut thy mouth with my oar.

MENEGO

With that face?

NANE

Ay, with that face.

MENEGO

Out of my way, go row a lighter.

NANE

Out of my way, go row a slave-galley.

MENEGO

Art thou from Caverzere or Pelestrina? Oh, thou goose!

NANE

I'll bet that I'll throw thy cap in the water.

MENEGO

Look here, I must be cautious, because I have the master aboard.

NANE

I have the master aboard as well, and I wish to pass.

MENEGO

Dost thou think I know thee not? Thou art but a public ferryman.

NANE

What of it! Whosoever spends his money is the master.

MENEGO

Pray, art thou going to let me pass?

NANE

Nay, I be going to bide here till the morrow.

MENEGO

Neither shall I budge.

NANE

I'll sink ere I back water.

MENEGO

I'll go to pieces ere I back water.

NANE

Back, thou low son of the lowest deuce in the pack.

MENEGO

Back thyself, thou son of a snail!

NANE

I be nailed fast, thou canst see for thyself.

MENEGO

And I drive my oar in to remain. (*Sticks his oar into the bottom of the canal.*)

NANE

What sayest thou? That I must back? Not for ten sequins. (*He leans over to speak with the persons in his gondola.*) If you wish to go ashore, then go ashore, but here I bide.

MENEGO

(*Also speaking to those he has in the gondola.*) Ay, but your excellency, my reputation be at stake; I wish not the rogue in that old hulk to get the better of me.

NANE

What meanest thou by that old hulk, thou numskull?

MENEGO

What wilt thou wager I throw not thy rowlock overboard?

NANE

(*To his passengers.*) As I said, should you wish to go ashore, you may go ashore, since I care not a fig. I be going to hold my own with that regatta racer.

MENEGO

(*To his passengers.*) Ay, your excellency, it be better for you to land. I be not going to back even though by it I lose my bread and butter.

NANE

See now! 'Cause of thee my travellers be going ashore. Thou'lt pay me for it.

MENEGO

I be the lad to give thee satisfaction.

NANE

It's as easy to chuck thee in the Canal as to laugh.

MENEGO

I be not scared of thee; nay, nor of ten like thee.

NANE

Oh! Oh!

MENEGO

Oh, thou donkey!

NANE

Oh, thou swine!

MENEGO

Oh, thou bullock![1]

This is not buffoonery, but naturalism, for whenever two gondolas collide in a *canaletto,* the gondoliers of Venice still shower just such abuse upon each other. Indeed, there is no buffoonery in *The Respectable Girl.* True, the conventional masks, Pantalone, Arlecchino, and Brighella are among its *dramatis personæ,* yet they indulge in no *lazzi* or other

[1] Act II, Scene 21.

tomfoolery, this play being an earnest effort with a moral purpose to maintain. As Ferdinando Galanti points out, "It is a model of serious popular comedy, whose very title hints of virtue." [2] Finally, it is the first true flight of Goldoni's genius.

"I proposed a model to my spectators for their imitation," he says of it, and so delighted was he with Bettina, this "virtuous model," and the "traits of her moral conduct," that he presented the trials of her wedded life in *The Good Wife* (*La Buona moglie*), a comedy in which the same characters reappear. Left to rock her baby alone, while her weak husband, led astray by his wild foster-brother, squanders in riotous living the thousand ducats Pantalone, his father, has given him, Bettina, the good wife, is still a girl of the people, unused to fine ways and servants. Simple and tender, she is content to bide the hour when Pasqualino will leave his mistresses and return to her loving arms, an event that happens when he is brought to his senses by seeing his foster-brother killed in a tavern brawl. When the Marchese di Ripa Verde, who sought her ruin, is arrested for debt, Bettina offers his wife an asylum in her house. Though she conserves her character in *The Good Wife,* this play takes her from the lively streets of Venice to a staid bourgeois parlour where she is ill at ease; furthermore, it is a sequel, and like most sequels lacking in the spontaneity of its original.

In *Women's Tittle-Tattle* (*I Pettegolezzi delle*

[2] *Carlo Goldoni e Venezia nel Secolo XVIII.*

donne), Goldoni again turns for his inspiration to the streets of Venice, the evils of the talebearing being his topic. At the end of the arduous season when he had boasted that he would write sixteen plays, he was at a loss for a subject for the last comedy. "We were at the last Sunday of the Carnival," he says, "and I had not written a line of the last piece nor even imagined the subject for it." Only ten days remained in which to accomplish the task he had set himself. His own words shall tell the characteristic manner of its fulfilment:

> I left my house that day, and, seeking distraction, went to the Square of Saint Mark. I looked about to see if any of the masks or jugglers might furnish me with the subject of a comedy, or some sort of spectacle for Shrovetide. I met, under the arcade of the clock, a man with whom I was instantly struck, and who provided me with the subject of which I was in quest. This was an old Armenian, ill-dressed, very dirty, and with a long beard, who went about the streets of Venice selling the dried fruits of his country, which he called Abagigi. This man, who was to be seen everywhere, and whom I had myself frequently met, was so well known and so much despised, that when any one wished to tease a girl seeking a husband, he proposed to her Abagigi. Nothing more was necessary to send me home satisfied. I entered my house, shut myself up in my closet, and began a popular comedy, which I called *I Pettegolezzi.*

Although written in dialect, *Women's Tittle-Tattle* does not picture the streets of Venice so truly as *The Respectable Girl;* moreover, the story it relates of a lover who breaks his troth because a spiteful woman sets evil tongues a-wagging, is a theatric story more

fitting the Improvised Comedy Goldoni was seeking to supplant than the National Comedy he was endeavouring to create. Its humour, however, is at moments delicious, the scenes in which gossip flies from lip to lip being as sparkling as any Goldoni has written; yet he makes no more than what he terms "the knot of the piece" of Abagigi the Armenian pedlar. Nevertheless it contains naturalistic sketches, quite worthy its author, such as the following portrayal of Merlino, a street-Arab from Naples, whom Cate, a laundress, tries to induce to carry her basket:

CATE

Come, lad, bear these clothes. Prithee make haste.

MERLINO

Oh, how I hate this work!

CATE

In this land if thou wouldst eat thou must work.

MERLINO

Rather would I live by my wits, or beg.

CATE

In truth, if thou shouldst ask charity, all will chase thee away. Go to work, they'll say, thou rascal, go to work.

MERLINO

Oh, I know my calling. Prithee. Alms for a poor man who is maimed. (*Acts the one-armed man.*) Be charitable to a poor cripple. (*Acts the cripple.*) Charity for a poor blind man. (*Acts the blind man.*) Have pity on a poor labourer, who fell from a scaffold, and can work no more. (*Moves about on his hind-quarters and his hands.*)

CATE

I say, but thou art a flower of virtue. From what land art thou?

MERLINO

I be a most unworthy Neapolitan beggar.

CATE

(*Aside.*) Oh, I be n't going to let that lad carry my basket. He be a little rogue who may rob me. (*To Merlino.*) Here's a penny. Now go about thy business.

MERLINO

Dost wish me no longer?

CATE

Nay, I be wishing nothing more.

MERLINO

Cursed be she who mothered thee; mayest thou grow as many ulcers as there be stitches in the clothes of this basket! Cursed be thy father, thy mother, and all thy generation!

CATE

Say what thou wilt. It's all right, since I don't understand thy dialect.[3]

MERLINO

Look, now, look now, someone's wishing thee.

CATE

What?

MERLINO

Mayst thou fall dead at once. Someone's called thee.

CATE

Who's called me?

MERLINO

A lady. Yonder, yonder, a lady.

CATE

Where? I see her not. Be that she? (*She turns around, and Merlino steals a shirt.*)

MERLINO

Creature of misery!

[3] Merlino speaks Neapolitan in the original.

CATE

What the devil sayest thou, thou accursed little parrot?

MERLINO

Mayst thou be killed!

CATE

What didst thou say?

MERLINO

Didst thou not understand me?

CATE

Nay, I did not understand.

MERLINO

If thou didst not understand, then art thou
Daughter of a cuckold's mate.
Heaven send thee with its hate
Boils a thousand as thy fate!
(*Exit singing and dancing.*) [4]

In *The Jealous Women* (*Le Donne gelose*) Goldoni mounts the social ladder a rung or two, the lower bourgeoisie,—a grade of society prosperous, yet still of the people,—being here portrayed. He depicts, too, the Latin idolatry of the Goddess of Chance, Siora Lucrezia, a confectioner's widow, who is the principal character of this comedy, being a professional sibyl who pretends to foretell the lucky numbers of the draw by omens and dreams. She is shrewd, however, for she is a professional usurer, as well, who lends money to her unlucky clients, and rents the garments they leave in pawn to her as costumes for the Carnival, a multiplicity of vocations that entangles her with the jealous women who give

[4] Act I, Scene 5.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER

National Gallery, London

the play its name, the clothes being recognized, and the husbands who patronize her being tracked to her house by their wives. Taunted by these jealous women with being the drab who has debauched their lords, Lucrezia draws a stiletto. "If I carry it," she says, as her enemies recoil, "I do not carry it to do harm to any one; but neither you nor any one shall trample on me, and by Heaven, if you be not careful, I will show you who I am." Yet she is not forced to commit murder in defence of her honour; since on winning the first prize in the lottery, she renounces her multifarious calling, her male clients returning to the bosoms of their respective families. Its dramatic material being of so diaphanous a texture, *The Jealous Women* cannot be numbered among Goldoni's best comedies; yet in characterization it is not deficient, Lucrezia, the heroine, being a naturalistic study of a woman of the people, shrewd, superstitious, and impetuous, yet so tenacious of her fair name as to be ready to shed blood for its sake.

Another Venetian comedy in which Goldoni depicts the lower bourgeoisie is *The Good Mother* (*La Buona madre*), a play in which he is even less dramatic, because too insistently moral, it being, as he acknowledges, "a decent play that failed decently." As Signor Galanti says pithily, "Once more the public gave the author to understand that ethics on the stage is a diet that pleases little." [5]

Although Goldoni failed in *The Jealous Women*

[5] Op. cit.

and *The Good Mother* to depict tradesfolk and their families with unerring skill, he made full amends in *The Boors* (*I Rusteghi*) a masterpiece in which he portrays the intolerance of the Venetian middle class, a hide-bound order, puritanical, almost, in its traditions.

The Domestic Tyrants, however, is a more fitting title than the one he has chosen for this consummate piece of stage naturalism, his boors being intractable family autocrats, whose words spell law in their respective households. Three of these tyrants of the hearth—Lunardo, Simon, and Canciano—have wives, Maurizio, the fourth, being a widower with an only son whom he has agreed to marry to Lunardo's daughter by a former bed. Lunardo, the most boorish of them, rules his family with a hand so high that no guests, except of his choosing, cross his threshold. To his wife he denies even the single day of carnival gaiety commonly allowed to women of her order, and when he barters his daughter's hand, he refuses to disclose the name of the husband he has chosen for her, much less grant her a sight of him. His masculine selfishness is admirably characterized when he thus expresses his contempt for "womenfolk" to his crony Maurizio, after the marriage of their children has been arranged by them.

LUNARDO

They say we know not how to enjoy ourselves.

MAURIZIO

Poor creatures! Are they able to see into our hearts? Do

they suppose there is no other society but theirs? Ah, my friend, it is a real joy to be able to say I have enough; that I want for nothing, and that if needs be I can lay my hands on a hundred sequins.

LUNARDO

Ay, sir, and live well, on fat capon, tender chickens, and a fine loin of veal.

MAURIZIO

And all good and cheap because you pay as you go.

LUNARDO

And all in your own house without squabble or vexation.

MAURIZIO

And without any one to peck at you.

LUNARDO

And without any one knowing your affairs.

MAURIZIO

And our own masters.

LUNARDO

And not ruled by our wives.

MAURIZIO

And our children behaving like children!

LUNARDO

That is the way my daughter is reared.

MAURIZIO

My son is a jewel, too; no danger of his wasting a farthing.

LUNARDO

My daughter knows how to do everything. At home she has had to do everything, even to washing the dishes.

MAURIZIO

And because I do not wish my son to spoon with the housemaids, I have brought him up to darn his socks and patch his own breeches.

LUNARDO

Good! (*Laughing.*)

MAURIZIO

Yes, indeed.

LUNARDO

Come, we'll arrange this marriage quickly.

MAURIZIO

Whenever you wish, my friend.

LUNARDO

I expect you to sup with me to-night. You know I told you so. Four sweetbreads. We'll prove their merits! Ah, but how fat they are!

MAURIZIO

We'll eat them.

LUNARDO

And have a merry time.

MAURIZIO

And be happy.

LUNARDO

And then they'll call us brutes.

MAURIZIO

Pooh!

LUNARDO

The hussies.[6]

These selfish old codgers are the bone and sinew of commercial Venice. Their faces are well known on the Rialto; their merchantmen ply between the Adriatic and the Mediterranean, ay, even as far as Sinope and Trebizond; yet their hearts are hard and cold as the ducats in their strong boxes, their minds as narrow as the streets they tread. Witness this scene between Lunardo and Simon, another of these domestic tyrants Goldoni has painted with a surpassing touch:

[6] Act I, Scene 5.

SIMON

You are right, my old friend, there are no young men now such as there were in our day. You remember that we did no more and no less than our fathers wished.

LUNARDO

I had two married sisters. I don't believe I saw them ten times in my whole life.

SIMON

I hardly ever spoke even to mother.

LUNARDO

Even to this day I scarcely know what an opera or a comedy is like.

SIMON

They took me to the opera by force, one evening, and I dozed throughout it.

LUNARDO

When I was a stripling, my father said unto me: "Wouldst thou rather see the magic-lantern, or have twopence?" I chose the twopence.

SIMON

And I! To save my tips was my habit; and from the farthings I filched, I acquired a hundred ducats which I invested at four per cent. Thus I have four ducats more of interest, and when I draw those four ducats it gives me a joy so great that I cannot describe it; not because I am greedy for those four ducats, but because I may say to myself, all this I earned when I was a lad.

LUNARDO

Show me to-day one who would do thus; they throw money away, so to speak, by shovelfuls.

SIMON

I would not mind the money they throw away, but they throw themselves away in a hundred ways.

LUNARDO

And the cause of it all is liberty.

SIMON

Ay, sir: so soon as they know how to put on their breeches they begin to stray.

LUNARDO

And know you who teaches them? Their mothers!

SIMON

Say no more. I have heard things that make my hair stand on end.

LUNARDO

Ay, sir, and this is what they say: "Poor little lad, let him regale himself. Poor little thing! Would you have him in the dumps?" If visitors come they call to him, "Come here, my child. His complexion, Madam Lucrezia, does it not make you wish to kiss him? If you but knew how astute he is. Sing thy little song, dear; recite thy piece of Trufaldino's. I should not say it, yet can he do anything—dance, play at cards, and write sonnets. Do you know, he is in love. He says he wishes to get married. He is somewhat pert. Yet all in good time, he is but a child, some day he will sensible be. Darling, come here, joy of my life! Give Madam Lucrezia a kiss." Bah! a shame, a disgrace! The senseless women![7]

This boor of Venice is thoroughly respected in the marts of trade, but by his own hearthstone he is the hectoring tyrant who thus admonishes Margarita, his wife, and Lucietta, his daughter, when he catches them decked out in finery:

LUNARDO

(*To Margarita.*) What means this, madam? Are you going to the ball?

MARGARITA

There now, just look at him. I dress myself up once in the year, and he grumbles. Are you afraid that you are coming to ruin?

[7] Act II, Scene 5.

LUNARDO

It matters not to me, let me tell you, if you should wear out even one frock a week. Thank Heaven, I am not a man who counts pennies. So much as a hundred ducats may I spend; yet not on such tomfoolery. What would you have these gentlemen who are coming to my house say? That you are a dressed-up manikin. No laughing-stock do I wish to be.

LUCIETTA

(*Aside.*) Really glad am I that he scolds her.

MARGARITA

What think you the other women will wear? One shoe and one slipper?

LUNARDO

They may wear what pleases them. Such mincing airs have not been seen in my house, and you shall not begin them now, and you shall not make me a butt for ridicule. Do you understand? [8]

This tyrant meets his match, however, in a clever woman, for Canciano, one of his bosom-friends, has a wife, by name Felice, who not only manages to lead her own grumbling husband by the nose, but Lunardo also, she being endowed with common sense as well as with a will that knows its way. Getting wind of the proposed marriage between Maurizio's son and Lunardo's daughter, Felice dresses the young man up in a woman's domino, and with Count Riccardo, her own cicisbeo, as his escort, introduces him within the austere precincts of Lunardo's dwelling, where he falls in love with Lucietta, his betrothed, whom hitherto he had neither seen nor known. Being caught in their clandestine love-making by their respective fathers, Filipeto is ordered home, and Lu-

[8] Act II, Scene 3.

cietta locked in her room; whereupon Lunardo and his cronies express their views of the scandal in this despotic, albeit masculine way:

LUNARDO

It is a question of honour; it is a question, to come to the point, of my family's reputation. A man of my standing! What will you say of me? What will you say of Lunardo Crozzola?

SIMON

Calm yourself, my dear man. It is not your fault. The women are to blame. Punish them, and all the world will applaud you.

CANCIANO

Ay, verily, we must make an example of them. We must humble the pride of those arrogant women, and teach men how to punish them.

SIMON

Let them call us boors.

CANCIANO

Let them call us savages.

LUNARDO

My spouse is at the bottom of it all.

SIMON

Punish her.

LUNARDO

It is that rattlepate who tags after her.

CANCIANO

Humble her.

LUNARDO

(*To Canciano.*) And your spouse is a good third.

CANCIANO

I will punish her.

LUNARDO

(*To Simon.*) And yours is also in the pack.

SIMON

She, too, shall pay for it.

LUNARDO

My dear friends, let us talk it over; let us consult together. The way things are now, what shall we do with them? As for the girl, that is easy; I have thought about her, and have made up my mind. In the first place, no more question of matrimony. She shall talk no more about getting married. I will send her to be locked up in some place, far from the world, between four walls, and that's the end of her.[9] But how are we to chastise our wives? Tell me your opinion.

CANCIANO

To confess the truth, I am in considerable doubt.

SIMON

We might clap them, too, into a retreat between four walls, and thus get out of the difficulty!

LUNARDO

That, let me tell you, would be a punishment for us rather than for them. We should be compelled to expend money, pay their keep, send them frocks that are at least neat, and howsoever much of a retreat it might be, there would always be more diversion and more liberty there than in our homes. Do I present it distinctly?

SIMON

You could not present it more distinctly, especially as regards you and me who do not give them a loose rein, as does my friend Canciano.

CANCIANO

What would you have me say? That you are right? We might keep them in the house locked up in a room; take them with us now and then to some entertainment; then lock them up again, and not let them see any one, or talk to any one.

[9] Goldoni was forbidden by the laws of Venice to use the word convent.

SIMON

Lock the women up without letting them talk to any one! That is a punishment that would kill them in less than three days.

CANCIANO

So much the better.

LUNARDO

But who is the man that wishes to play the jailer? And moreover, if her kinsfolk should discover it, there would be the devil to pay. They would have half the world after you. They would make you release her, and furthermore, they would call you a bear, a ruffian, a dog.

SIMON

And when you have yielded either through love or duty, they would get the upper hand, and you would no longer be able to lift your voice.

CANCIANO

Precisely what my spouse has done with me.

LUNARDO

The right method, to tell the truth, would be to use a stick.

SIMON

Ay, upon my word; and let the world talk.

CANCIANO

But—if they rebel against us?

SIMON

That might happen, you know.

CANCIANO

I know whereof I speak.

LUNARDO

In that case we should be in a pretty bad pickle.

SIMON

Besides, don't you know there are men who beat their wives. But do you imagine that they can subdue them in that way? Zounds! They are worse than ever; they act out of spite. Unless you kill them, there is no remedy.

LUNARDO

Kill them! That's going too far.

CANCIANO

You are right; since after all, do what you will, you cannot do without women.

SIMON

Yet would it not be a joy to have a good, quiet, obedient spouse? Would it not be a comfort?

LUNARDO

Once I knew what it was like. My first, poor dear, was a lamb. My present is a basilisk.

CANCIANO

And mine! She must have everything her own way.

SIMON

And I protest, raise a tumult, and accomplish naught.

LUNARDO

All that is vexing; but still it may be borne. But in my present predicament, to tell the truth, much is at stake. I would like to decide, yet do not know what should be done.

SIMON

Despatch her to her kinsfolk.

LUNARDO

Ay, and get myself laughed at!

CANCIANO

Send her away; force her to remain in the country.

LUNARDO

Still worse! She would squander my income in less than a week.

SIMON

Have her reasoned with; find somebody who can bring her to her senses.

LUNARDO

Bah! She will listen to no one.

CANCIANO

Try putting her wardrobe, her jewels, under lock and key; keep her down; humiliate her.

LUNARDO

That I have tried; yet she acts worse than ever.

SIMON

I understand; this is the way to do, my friend.

LUNARDO

How?

SIMON

Enjoy her as she is.

CANCIANO

I, too, have thought that to be the only remedy.

LUNARDO

Yes, I saw that some time ago. I saw, too, that, being what she is, it's the only way. I had made up my mind to stomach her, yet what she had done to me now is too much. Ruin a daughter in such a manner. Permit a lover to enter the house! True, I had destined him to be her lord, yet, to tell the truth, what knew she of my intentions? Some inkling did I give her regarding the disposal of her hand, yet was it not possible that I should change my mind? Was it not possible that we might not come to an agreement? Might it not have been deferred for months, ay, even years? And now she introduces him into my house!—masked!—clandestinely! Arranges for them to see each other!—converse together! A daughter of mine!—an unsoiled dove!—I cannot control myself. I shall humble her, I tell you. I should punish her, even if I felt certain it meant sudden ruin.

SIMON

Mistress Felice is at the bottom of it.

LUNARDO

(*To Canciano.*) Ay, that daft wife of yours is at the bottom of it.

CANCIANO

You are right. My wife shall pay for it.[10]

[10] Act III, Scene 1.

While these surly husbands are thus giving vent to their intolerant sentiments they are confronted by Felice, who confounds them with outspoken truth about their contumacy. So pitilessly does she lash them with her woman's tongue that Lunardo, brought to a realization of his churlishness, consents to the marriage of his daughter to Filipeto. The following shaft aimed by Felice at Lunardo and his cronies bears a moral which Goldoni says "is not extremely needed, there being scarcely any adorers of the ancient simplicity," yet this is manifestly a sop to the feelings of the boors his satire had flayed, their type being perennial:

> Don't you see? This boorishness, this uncouthness that surrounds you, is the cause of all the turbulance this day has brought forth, and it is going to make you—all three of you—do you hear? I am speaking to all three of you!—it is going to make you rabid, hateful, discontented, and universally ridiculed. Be a little more civil, tractable, humane. Examine the actions of your wives, and so long as they are honest, yield a little, endure a little. . . . As for the finery, so long as they do not run after every fashion, so long as the family is not brought to ruin, neatness is both fitting and becoming. In brief, if you wish to live quietly, if you wish to be on good terms with your wives, act like men, not like savages; rule, but do not tyrannize, and love if you would be loved.

"In *The Boors* there is nothing false," as Signor Molmenti so aptly puts it; [11] for, slight though it is in dramatic texture, it is a masterpiece of naturalism wherein is depicted supremely well the strait-laced burgher of Venice with a mind as hermetically

[11] *Carlo Goldoni.*

closed to the outside world as the house in which he immures his wife and daughter, a heart as unyielding as the hand with which he drives his hard bargains. The only things he cares a whit to know are the prices current upon the Rialto, or the rates of exchange. His name is not inscribed in the Golden Book of Patricians; yet in his strong-box no mean proportion of the gold of Venice is locked against the hapless day when he, being dead and gone, his daughter, wedded to the son of his crony, will spend a hundred thousand lire of his parings for some diamond shoe-buckles with which to dazzle a scented cicisbeo. He is a burgher of the old school, a merchant whose sharpness and cupidity have helped to amass the wealth of Venice and make her the envied and hated of the world, and Goldoni has portrayed him with a touch at once ruthless and sure.

Following the production of *The Boors,* Gasparo Gozzi, the brother of Goldoni's bitter rival, Carlo Gozzi, published in the *Gazzetta Veneta* [12] an appreciative yet critical review of this, perhaps the most naturalistic of all Goldoni's plays: "All the incidents in this comedy are arranged," he says, "with so exquisite a sense of proportion, and all are brought to view and set in motion so artistically, that we may say:

> "Here men erect or bent, men quick or slow,
> In views dissolving, pass beneath our gaze.
> Of bodies long or short, we see each phase
> Move 'neath the ray, whose penetrating glow

[12] Number V.

Illuminates, betimes, the shadowy cloak
Men craftily unto their aid invoke.

"Precisely as a sunbeam," adds Gozzi, "penetrating through a window chink that seemed both void and empty, displays to you a lengthening streak of minute particles in perpetual motion, so does the genius of the author illumine and make visible a thousand minute circumstances which you could not have imagined, much less have seen." Turning from this poetical effusiveness to discriminating prose, this contemporary critic declares that "the situations bud and bloom readily of their own accord," in this comedy, and that "wit and homely speech sparkle continually." Yet Gozzi's criticism, so generous for a contemporary, overlooked one penetrating element of Goldoni's comedy that we of to-day may appreciate more readily than he: namely, the conflict between the old, conservative traditions of Venice, and the modern luxury that was corrupting her—a presage as it were of her downfall. Gozzi failed, also, in doing justice to the admirable characterization of Lunardo, Goldoni's four boors being not as he declared "divers aspects of the same character," but rather diverse characters made outwardly similar by the same traditions. Among them, Lunardo, the most obstinate, stands forth as a portrayal rivalled in modern comedy only by a few of Molière's immortal characters.[13]

[13] *I Quattro rusteghi,* an opera taken from Goldoni's play (book by Giuseppe Pizzolato, music by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari), was produced at Munich in 1906.

Another dialect comedy in which Goldoni treats domestic tyranny is *Master Theodore the Grumbler; or, The Disagreeable Old Man* (*Sior Todero Brontalon o il vecchio fastidioso*), a play whose cantankerous protagonist is a boor without the humanity of Lunardo, a bear without the beneficence of Géronte;[14] for although he is drawn from life, as Goldoni declares, Master Theodore is a very theatrical personage, who storms and growls, and even locks up the coffee and sugar to keep them out of the reach of his daughter-in-law. In brief, he is a person quite too theatrically disagreeable to be of lasting interest.

"There was once an old man in Venice called Theodore," Goldoni tells us, "the most rude, ill-natured and unpleasant man in the world, and he left behind him so consummate a reputation that every grumbler in Venice is called Theodore the Grumbler." "I knew one of those ill-natured old men," he goes on to say, "and I wished to avenge his daughter-in-law, a worthy woman whom I saw frequently; so I drew in the same picture the portraits of her husband and her father-in-law." The lady was in the secret, and when the play was given, the irascible father and his meek son were both recognized, so they left the theatre, "the one furious, the other humiliated." And the play proved such a success that its run continued until the close of the season. In spite of the fact that the qualities which are the charm of Goldoni seem almost entirely lacking in this play,

[14] The title rôle of *Le Bourru bienfaisant.*

"it is among the most popular of our poet's comedies," Signor Galanti assures us, though why he draws this conclusion it is difficult to divine. Indeed, it is easier to share with Signor Molmenti a "certain repugnance" he feels for Sior Todero.[15]

The merits of *The New House* (*La Casa nova*) need excite, however, no such difference of opinion, this comedy presenting as natural a picture of life as any Goldoni has drawn. Indeed, were it not lacking in character studies as humorous as Lunardo and his cronies, it would take rank as Goldoni's Venetian masterpiece, its plot, being more deftly woven than that of *The Boors,* and the lesson it teaches farther reaching. In *The Boors* the author pictures fathers as stern as those of New England in the days of its most rigorous puritanism, and makes it reasonable to expect that when these austere conservatives are dead and gone the ducats in their strong-boxes will be scattered far and wide by children too narrowly reared to withstand the temptation of a city so cosmopolitan as Venice. In *The New House* Goldoni portrays the weak son of just such a Puritan as Lunardo, squandering his moderate inheritance to satisfy the caprices of the domineering little upstart he has married. Being a poor girl of common breeding, Cecilia, the wife, has had her head turned completely by what she believes is a rich marriage, Anzoletto, her husband, in order to win her love, having made an ostentatious show of wealth he does not possess.

[15] *Carlo Goldoni.*

The New House, which gives the comedy its name, is a sumptuous dwelling Anzoletto has leased to receive his bride, though he is without the means to pay either the rent or the artisans he has employed to renovate it. When the curtain rises a group of upholsterers, painters, and carpenters, working as inertly as modern trades-unionists, grumble about their unpaid wages; meanwhile Lucietta, a gossipy housemaid, tears to shreds for their benefit the character of her new mistress, "an overweening snob," as she calls her, who having wasted a fortune upon "household goods, wages, and new furniture," is "still dissatisfied." With a sister to marry and a fortune squandered, her uxorious young master is "reduced to extremities," she avers, the rent of the new house being unpaid, as well as the six months' wages due herself. This state of affairs causes the spokesman of the workers to threaten a strike, until Anzoletto, the master of the house, cajoles him into waiting till the morrow for the money without which, in this artisan's words, "even the blind will not sing."

Menechina, the unmarried sister, whose dowry Anzoletto has dissipated to gratify his wife's whims, is enamoured of Lorenzino, the young cousin of Checca, a married woman who dwells on the floor above, the word *casa* of this comedy's title signifying "apartment" rather than "house" in the literal sense. Having lost her heart to Lorenzino while watching him pace back and forth beneath her window, Menechina's ill will toward her new sister-in-law is en-

hanced tenfold when she is forced by Anzoletto, her brother, to move to a court-yard room in order that his wife may have the sun in hers.

When Cecilia, though a bride of only fifteen days' standing, comes attended by a cicisbeo to view the new house, her common little nose turns haughtily upward at everything she finds there, even to Lucietta, the housemaid, whom she discharges. Lucietta appeals to Menechina, who upholds her, whereupon a pretty kettle of feminine fish is set a-stewing which Anzoletto strives to cool. His creditors press their claims meanwhile, forcing him to the humiliating extremity of appealing in vain to his wife's cicisbeo for a loan. In the midst of this family imbroglio, Checca, the occupant of the floor above, comes with Rosina, her sister, to call upon the new tenants, only to be refused the door because she tactlessly asks to see both the warring ladies of the house, each of whom feels that the honour of this visit should have been paid to her alone.

Humiliated by this affront, Checca and Rosina rake the arrogant bride over the coals of their anger, and tarnish the character of the girl their cousin Lorenzino loves, in this thoroughly feminine way:

CHECCA

Either they are boors, or they are stuck-up.

ROSINA

Whatever they are, they do not appear to me to be boors, since it is evident that they go about.

CHECCA

Why, the bride has been married only a fortnight, and already she has her cavalier to serve her.

ROSINA

And the girl, hasn't she coquetted all her life?

CHECCA

According to our cousin Lorenzino, when out of doors she wears her veil down to her waist, but in the house or on the balcony she has no scruples about being seen.

ROSINA

Do not folks say that they spooned together all day and all night?

CHECCA

La! what girls they are! Listen, sister, do not follow the example of these flighty creatures. I can say that my husband was the first admirer who ever addressed me. Remember that our mother reared us and that now you are living with me.

ROSINA

Sister, dear, no need is there for you to preach me such a sermon. You know the sort of girl I am.

CHECCA

Why do you think those miserable hussies refused to receive us?

ROSINA

I will tell you. It may be because they have just moved into their new house; that it is not set to rights, that it is not furnished yet, and on that account they did not wish anybody around.

CHECCA

Truly, I believe you are right. It must needs be that they're stuck-up for a good reason. In fact, to confess the truth, we have been too hasty in calling; better had we waited until to-morrow; yet I had such a curiosity to see this bride near by that I could not restrain myself.[16]

In spite of her resentfulness for the snub admin-

[16] Act II, Scene 1.

istered to her, Checca, a kind-hearted soul, grants Menechina and Lorenzino a tryst in her apartment. In the midst of their love-making, Cecilia, the bride, comes to make amends for her rudeness, the lover meanwhile hiding in an adjoining closet. First quarrelling shrewishly with Menechina, her sister-in-law, Cecilia then lords it over her hostess in this way, so characteristic of the newly rich of our own, as well as of Goldoni's day:

CECILIA

How do you amuse yourselves? Do you go to the play? Do you go in society?

CHECCA

I scarcely know what to say. When my husband is in Venice we go once or twice in the week to the opera, or to the play, but now that he is absent we remain at home.

CECILIA

If you wish you may have the keys to any of my boxes. I have them at all the theatres, you know. My gondola, too, is at your disposal, if you wish it.

CHECCA

Many thanks. To confess the truth, when my husband is not at home I go nowhere.

CECILIA

And when your husband is at home, do you wish him to be always with you?

CHECCA

If he so choose.

CECILIA

And you put him to that amount of trouble, to that amount of bondage? Poor man, you should take pity on your husband. Induce him to attend to his own affairs. Permit him to go where he pleases. May you not go to the play without your husband?

CHECCA

Oh, I do not mind. When my husband cannot go I remain at home.

CECILIA

(*Aside.*) Oh, what a fool! And what, pray, do you do at home? Do you play cards?

CHECCA

Sometimes we amuse ourselves.

CECILIA

And what do you play?

CHECCA

Tresette, cotecchio, mercante in fiera.[17]

CECILIA

La! I have no use for such games. I like faro, but for low stakes, mind you, a bank of eight or ten sequins, no more.[18] You should attend one of our routs. Only persons à la mode,—I do not mind saying. Never are we less than fourteen or sixteen, and almost every evening we eat something, either a brace or two of woodcock, a smoked tongue, some truffles, or some delicious fish or other; moreover, there is our wine cellar, of which no one need be ashamed; it is something exquisite.[19]

Evicted from her new house when doting Anzoletto is unable to borrow from false friends, Cecilia, the bride who utters this vulgar cock-a-hoop, becomes a contrite and loving wife, her husband's surly uncle, whose heart has a tender spot in it, being the *deus ex machina* to whom she humbly appeals in her adversity. Kind-hearted Checca, too, wins this uncle's promise of a dowry for Menechina; so the story ends

[17] The first was a four-handed round game; in the second, the one who lost most points, won, making it somewhat like "hearts." The third was played with two packs of cards and by an indefinite number of players.

[18] A Venetian sequin was worth about $2.50. [19] Act II, Scene 9.

happily, Cecilia's too sudden metamorphosis from an ill-bred snob to an abject penitent being the one discordant note in an otherwise masterly comedy.

Once more Goldoni had painted life from the life about him. "I had changed my lodgings," he says, "and as I was always looking for subjects of comedy, I found one in the embarrassments of my removal. I did not, however, derive the subject from my own predicament, but the circumstances suggested the title, and my imagination did the rest." In the preface he boasts that if he had written but this single comedy, it would have been sufficient to secure for him the reputation he had acquired through so many others. Moreover, he returns to the subject eleven years later, Cristofolo, the benevolent though surly uncle who unties the knots of the plot with his magnanimity, being, as his author confesses, "the germ of Géronte," the testy yet tender-hearted old codger who gives *The Beneficent Bear* (*Le Bourru bienfaisant*) its title. Although lacking in the intensely human characterization of *The Boors,* "the skill with which *The New House* is constructed," to quote Gasparo Gozzi, "makes it interesting from top to bottom." Goldoni had treated prodigality before,[20] but nowhere so vitally as in this Venetian comedy. Moreover, the subject is perennial, and of such enduring interest that Sardou could not fail to see its worth. From the materials used by Goldoni, this master-

[20] In *Il Prodigo, La Bancarotta, La Buona moglie, La Famiglia dell' antiquario, I Malcontenti,* and *La Villeggiatura.*

builder of plays constructed his *Maison neuve,* a comedy almost as far from the truth of life as Goldoni's play is close to it.

A few leagues south of Venice on the sandy shore of the lagoon stood the fishing town of Chioggia, with a speech and manners of its own. There Goldoni had passed, as we have seen, many days of his youth, and in early manhood had held the post of coadjutor to the criminal chancellor. Inspired by his experiences there, he wrote in the dialect of that quaint place *The Chioggian Brawls* (*Le Baruffe chiozzotte*), a play of the common people, that shares with *The Boors* the distinction of doing him "the greatest honour." [21]

On October 10th, 1786, Goethe wrote from Venice:

> At last I can say I have seen a comedy: They played to-day at the San Luca Theatre *Le Baruffe chiozzotte,* which I should interpret, "The Brawls and Shouting of Chioggia." The characters are all seafaring men, inhabitants of Chioggia, and their wives, sisters, and daughters. The usual babble of such people in good and evil—their dealings with one another, their vehemence, but kindness of heart, commonplace remarks, and spontaneous manners, their naïve wit and humour—all this was skilfully imitated. The piece is by Goldoni, and as I had been only the day before in the place itself, and as the voices and behaviour of the sailors and people of the seaport still echoed in my ears and floated before my eyes, it was a great joy to me; and although I did not understand many a feature, I was nevertheless, on the whole, able to follow it pretty well.

Continuing, Goethe expounded what appeared to

[21] Although the dialect in which *The Chioggian Brawls* is written is not precisely Venetian, the differences that mark it are slight, Chioggia being a dependency of Venice.

him to be the story of the play; yet when the plot waxed too hot for his comprehension, he dismissed it as "an endless din of scolding, railing, and screaming." Its spirit was not lost upon him, however, for in conclusion he says:

> I never saw anything like the noisy delight the people evinced at seeing themselves and their mates represented with such truth to nature. It was one continued laugh and tumultuous shout of exultation from beginning to end. . . . Great praise is due the author, who out of nothing had here created a most amusing entertainment.

At the time Goethe wrote, Goldoni, though a feeble octogenarian, was as light-hearted and generous towards his fellow-men as when, at the age of fifty-four, he had first put upon the stage of that same San Luca Theatre the vivacious picture of Chioggian life which so charmed his great contemporary. To have witnessed the "noisy delight" of those people of Venice would have warmed the cockles of his honest old heart, yet he, an exile at a moribund court, could only recall the former night of triumph while thus writing in his memoirs:

> I composed a Venetian piece, entitled *The Chioggian Brawls,* a low comedy that produced an admirable effect. . . . I had been coadjutor of the criminal chancellor at Chioggia in my youth. . . . My position brought me in contact with that numerous and tumultuous population of fishermen, sailors, and women of the people, whose only place of meeting was the open street. I knew their manners, their singular language, their gaiety, and their spite; I was enabled to paint them accurately; and the capital, which is only eight leagues distant from the town, was perfectly well acquainted with my originals.

That the exceedingly human plot of this play should have been to Goethe a "demon of confusion," is not surprising; a court official in the play itself—the sole Venetian character—being unable to understand the dialect of Padron Fortunato, a stuttering fisherman, described by Goethe as "an old sailor who, from the hardships he has been exposed to from his childhood, trembles and falters in all his limbs, and even in his very organs of speech."

When the curtain rises, this stammering sea-dog is aboard the fishing-smack (*tartana*) of Padron Toni, whose wife, Pasqua, and sister, Lucietta, are seen making lace before the door of their house. Libera, wife of the "trembling, faltering Fortunato," together with her sisters Orsetta and Checca, sits in the street too, stitching and gossiping. Aboard the smack are Titta-Nane, Lucietta's betrothed, and Beppo, her brother, plighted to Orsetta. At large in the streets of Chioggia is Toffolo, nicknamed "Marmotino" (little fool), a youthful boatman and the town jack-a-dandy. When this young fellow, strolling down the street, sees pretty Lucietta lace-making, he buys her a slice of roast pumpkin from a passing street vender, and one for Orsetta too, the betrothed of Beppo, but when he offers to treat Checca, she, in pique at being invited last, refuses to accept. "But Lucietta did," Toffolo says ingenuously. "She is capable of anything," answers Checca, with a pert toss of her head, an aspersion that starts the fiery ball of Italian temper rolling.

COMMON PEOPLE

Museo Correr

Before the Chioggian brawls that give the play its name burst fully forth, Padron Toni's smack is shown at her moorings, her yellow sail with the winged lion of St. Mark flapping lazily in the breeze, her nets drying on her briny quarters. The catch is unloaded; the women flock to the port to greet their husbands and lovers; then Lucietta cattishly whispers to her brother Beppo to beware of Toffolo's attentions to Orsetta, while Checca, with vindictiveness equally feline, informs Titta-Nane that Toffolo has brazenly presented Lucietta with "roast pumpkin"—a wagging of tongues that sends both Beppo and Titta-Nane in murderous search of him. Beppo meets him; abuse pours volubly from his angry lips; Toffolo throws stones, Beppo draws his knife, his father intervenes; Titta-Nane appears armed with a pistol. Chairs and lace-cushions are upset; wives and sweethearts shriek abuse; fathers, brothers, and lovers curse and pommel one another just because a town dandy, in love with one pretty girl, has given another a slice of roast pumpkin; yet although knives are drawn and pistols pointed, the first act is brought to a close without the actual spilling of blood or any one's knowing exactly why he has been drawn into these Chioggian brawls.

In the second act Toffolo lodges a complaint with the coadjutor against the unwarranted attack made upon him, and a bailiff is sent to hale every one connected with the rumpus into court; but before this official executes his warrants, the following touching

lovers' quarrel ensues, jealous Titta-Nane stumbling upon temperate Pasqua while she is imploring Lucietta to realize that her lover's anger is merely another proof of his love:[22]

TITTA-NANE

(*Seeing Lucietta.*) I wish to cast her off, but have not the heart.

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) Look at him.

LUCIETTA

(*To Pasqua.*) Oh, I have my lace to look to. I have that to look to.

PASQUA

(*Aside.*) I'd like to smash her head on that lace-cushion.

TITTA-NANE

She does not look at me at all. She does not think of me at all.

PASQUA

Good day to thee, Titta-Nane.

TITTA-NANE

Good day to thee.

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) Greet him.

LUCIETTA

(*To Pasqua.*) Dost fancy I will be the first?

TITTA-NANE

What a haste to work!

PASQUA

What sayest thou? Are we not respectable women, lad?

TITTA-NANE

Yes, yes, you do well to make haste while you may; when young lads come nosing around there will be no time to work.

[22] To convey the lisping charm of this dialect scene, as well as its Italian volubility, in bluff English is manifestly an impossibility.

LUCIETTA

(*Coughs mockingly.*)

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) Relent.

LUCIETTA

Never.

Lucietta goes off, and Pasqua tries to assuage Titta-Nane by telling him that when he is at sea and the wind "blows up fresh," Lucietta gets up in the middle of the night to go out on her balcony and watch the clouds; for "she can see with no eyes but thine" she assures him. But Titta-Nane is obdurate. "Get her to confess all and ask pardon," he says. Lucietta returns bearing his gifts.

LUCIETTA

Take, sir, thy slippers and ribbons and the keepsakes thou gavest me. (*She flings them on the ground.*)

PASQUA

Oh, dear me! Art thou daft? (*She picks up the gifts and places them on a chair.*)

TITTA-NANE

And this indignity to me?

LUCIETTA

Didst thou not cast me off? Take thy trinkets. Do with them what thou wilt.

TITTA-NANE

If ever thou shouldst speak to "Marmotino," I will kill him.

LUCIETTA

Merciful heavens! Thou hast cast me off; wouldst thou lord it over me as well?

TITTA-NANE

I cast thee off because of him—I cast thee off.

PASQUA

Fie on thee, lad, for thinking that Lucietta would stoop to such a vagabond.

LUCIETTA

Ill-favoured may I be, a hapless wretch may I be, or anything thou likest; yet never will I be enamoured of a ferryman.

TITTA-NANE

Why didst thou let him loiter around thee? Why didst thou let him buy thee roast pumpkin?

LUCIETTA

Well, well, what a crime!

PASQUA

Mercy, what an ado about nothing!

TITTA-NANE

When I make love, I wish no one to be able to gossip. I will have it thus, I will. By Heaven, no man has wronged Titta-Nane! No man shall wrong him.

LUCIETTA

How thin-skinned thou art! (*Wipes her eyes.*)

TITTA-NANE

I am a man, dost hear! I am a man. I am no boy, dost hear!

LUCIETTA

(*Weeps, showing that she is making an effort not to weep.*)

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) What ails thee?

LUCIETTA

Nothing. (*Weeping, she nudges Pasqua.*)

PASQUA

Art thou weeping?

LUCIETTA

With anger, with anger; well could I flay him with my own hands.

TITTA-NANE

Now, then, what means this sobbing? (*Approaching Lucietta.*)

LUCIETTA

Go to perdition!

TITTA-NANE

Dost thou hear, siora? (*To Pasqua.*)

PASQUA

Ay, isn't she right, when thou art worse than a dog?

TITTA-NANE

Wilt wager that I throw myself in the canal?

PASQUA

Fie upon thee, fool!

LUCIETTA

Let him go; let him go.

PASQUA

Fie upon thee, hussy!

TITTA-NANE

I loved her dearly, I loved her dearly. (*Showing tenderness.*)

PASQUA

(*To Titta-Nane.*) And now thou lovest her no more?

TITTA-NANE

How can I, if she loves me no more?

PASQUA

What sayest thou to that, Lucietta?

LUCIETTA

Let me alone, let me alone!

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) Here, take thy shoes, thy ribbons, and thy trinkets.

LUCIETTA

I wish nothing, I wish nothing.

PASQUA

(*To Lucietta.*) Come here; hearken to me.

LUCIETTA

Let me alone.

PASQUA

Say one word.

LUCIETTA

No.

PASQUA

(*To Titta-Nane.*) Come here, Titta-Nane.

TITTA-NANE

Never.

PASQUA

Get thee gone.

TITTA-NANE

Nay, I will not.

PASQUA

I should send both of you to be drawn and quartered.[23]

"This is no longer comedy," says Professor Ortolani, "but the lacerations of the human heart—the blood of the people." [24] Indeed, this play could not have called forth "one continued laugh and tumultuous shout of exultation," as Goethe relates; for when Titta-Nane quarrelled with Lucietta there must have been a moment of silence tempered by sympathetic tears. Yet there is food for laughter enough when all the Chioggian brawlers being haled before the coadjutor, Padron Fortunato's stammering causes that official to close his court in sheer desperation.

In the final act the coadjutor steps from the machine, a god to quell these Chioggian brawls by his good offices, ardent Titta-Nane being united to his adored Lucietta, fiery Beppo to Orsetta, and Toffolo,

[23] Act II, Scene 3. [24] Op. cit.

the mischief-maker, to tattling Checca. This accomplished, the benevolent coadjutor orders wine, pumpkins, and other goodies, and calling for fiddles, bids the reconciled Chioggians regale themselves. In the words of Vernon Lee:

> Have we seen the ship come in, and fish in the basket? Have we seen the women at their lace-cushions? Have we heard that storm of cries, and shrieks, and clatter, and scuffling feet? Have we really witnessed this incident of fishing life on the Adriatic? No; we have only laid down a little musty volume, at the place marked *Le Baruffe chiozzotte*.[25]

Among all Goldoni's comedies, there is none so pulsating with life as *The Chioggian Brawls*. It fairly teems with colour and evidences of fidelity of touch; it is a play, in fact, such as perhaps never had been written in the world before; at least the present writer can recall in the previous range of the drama no such actual picture of lower-class humanity, no play dealing solely with the proletariat, where every character, every situation is true to the life of the common people. It is true that farces of street life are as old as Menander: indeed it was the Venetian custom to present dialect farces at carnival time; but where is there a comedy written before Goldoni's day and dealing solely with the lower class, that possesses its good-humoured sincerity, its humanity, its fidelity to the life of the common people—their emotions, as well as their vagaries?

Beneath the broad merriment of this play there

[25] Op. cit.

are undertones of human passion that raise it from what its author modestly calls "low comedy" to the level of drama. Here was a painting of actual life; yet artificial Marivaux had just danced in France his dramatic minuet. To quote Professor Ortolani once more, "Marivaux is a bit of lace a zephyr will tear, Goldoni a piece of good sound cloth time will not wear out." The one is the poet of a condition, the other the poet of a race. Unlike his French contemporary, the Venetian wrote from the depths of his own experience and observation. His dialect characters are not pretty mechanical dolls dressed in lace, but pulsating human beings, clad in homespun. Keen critics, such as Goethe, must ever give "great praise" to his truthful pictures of Venetian life, painted in colours so vivid that they will endure long after the delicate hues of Marivaudage shall have faded completely.

XI

EXOTIC COMEDIES

WHENEVER Goldoni lays the scene of a comedy in a land where he has not dwelt, the light of his peculiar genius is usually obscured by a nescient mist which even his brilliant stage-craft fails to dissipate entirely. This is particularly true of his exotic comedies in verse, such as *The Persian Bride* (*La Sposa persiana*) and *The Fair Savage* (*La Bella selvaggia*), whose jejune lines are befogged by outlandish atmosphere. On the other hand, cheering sunlight permeates the artificiality of the exotic comedies in prose whenever their studied refinement is disturbed by an outburst of mirth, which Goldoni's spontaneous nature could never wholly restrain. Though the path their author here treads is strange, his steps are not retarded by any fettering measure; while in the scenes of these comedies he does not wander so far afield—England and Holland being nearer his native land than the Orient or America, and certainly more akin to it in custom and sentiment. There are only four of these exotic comedies in prose—by far the smallest number in any single category of his work; yet, few though they are, they reflect, more truly than any which came from his

prolific pen, the literary influences of the eighteenth century: an age like our own, as Mr. Charles Leonard Moore aptly puts it,[1] "of smugness and snugness," and like it, too, an age of literary common sense unadorned by poetry and undisturbed by heroism and profundities, since, to quote Mr. Moore again:

> In thought, we have substituted the idea of evolution for rationalism; in form we have put the novel in place of satire or didactic form. But for absolute poetry—the poetry of imagination and beauty—we have the same disinclination as our forefathers had then. Tragedy is again abhorrent to us and we wreak our souls on humour and social comedy.

Moreover, our own age, like the eighteenth century, is one of social upheaval and discontent, in which the third estate is again arrayed against the church and the privileged classes. We have our philosophers, too, our preachers of the rights of man, therefore there is more than literary common sense to make us akin to the eighteenth century.

Kindly Goldoni's spontaneous naturalism was ill at ease when arrayed in didactic sentiment; yet when, as in *Pamela Unmarried* (*Pamela nubile*), the first of his exotic comedies in prose, he wanders metaphorically away from impulsive Venice to complacent London by way of restless Paris, he is brought under the influence of both the didacticism and discontent of his age. Its unquestioned wit and humor went with him; therefore in viewing his *Pamela,* a

[1] *The Eighteenth Century Come Again*, The Dial, September 18, 1911.

comedy founded upon Samuel Richardson's epoch-marking novel of that name, the thing to be considered in addition to its exoticism is the part English smugness and French unrest played in moulding it; for, though its sentimentality is as wearisomely nice as that of the novel from which it is taken, there is a presage of Rousseau in it.

Although Richardson disputes with Defoe, Prévost, Marivaux, and in an even greater degree with Madame de la Fayette, for the honour of having written the first modern novel, no one denies that his *Pamela* possesses the essential elements of fiction; concisely summed up by a modern critic as "plot, motive, character portrayal, emotional excitement, background, and style." [2] Moreover, if *Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded* be not the first novel, it is certainly the first "best seller"; this work of a prosperous, vain, timid, and fat little English printer having created for its "lambkin" of a heroine a veritable furore, not only in England, but on the continent as well, where it was translated into several tongues and read as widely as in the land of its birth. Goldoni, however, was not the first playwright to realize the dramatic value of its heroine's native innocence and purity, virtue being an appealing dramatic subject, possibly because of its contrast to the reality of eighteenth century life. In 1749, the year before Goldoni's *Pamela* saw the boards, Voltaire had presented to a Parisian audience his *Nanine,* also a play based on

[2] Charles F. Horne, *The Technique of the Novel.*

Richardson's novel; yet six years before (1743) La Chaussée had put forth his *Pamela,* a five-act comedy in verse; while about the same time another stage version of this story appeared from the pen of Louis de Boissy, a lesser light.[3]

La Chaussée, the author of one of these stage Pamelas, holds a position in the drama not unlike that occupied in fiction by Richardson; for, while the Englishman was crystallizing into a popular form the various elements that compose the modern novel, the Frenchman was inventing lachrymose comedy (*comédie larmoyante*), or bourgeois tragedy (*tragédie bourgeoise*) as it is sometimes called—a dramatic form now termed drama, or comedy drama, according to the intensity of the plot. Intended to call forth tears as well as laughter, it is the form that vies with farce in holding the attention of modern audiences; for seldom now are we regaled by pure comedy, such as Molière's, or pure tragedy, such as that of the Greeks, or of Racine. Until La Chaussée's day tragedy and comedy were not blended in plays of contemporaneous manners, the nearest previous approach to lachrymose comedy being the tragi-comedy, or play of serious emotions with a happy ending. As this latter form was not used to treat of everyday life, La Chaussée sounded a new dramatic note. To quote one of his contemporaries:[4]

> He has invented a new style of comedy. It had represented

[3] *Pamela en France; ou la vertu mieux éprouvée.*

[4] L. Riccobini, *Lettera al signor dottor Muratori,* May 30, 1737. Quoted in the *Nouvelle Biographie Générale,* Vol. XXVIII.

heretofore the domestic life of burghers and well-to-do folk, and sometimes even of artisans: the ancient stage, Greek as well as Latin, furnishes us no longer with models except those of the nature which the moderns have imitated. There is, however, in society a class of people excluded from a comic plot; gentlemen and lords of noble birth being held to be too exalted to enter into the domestic situations which have always been the inheritance of comedy. On the other hand, they cannot function in tragedy, since they are not great enough to wear the buskin, worthy only of princes and heroic deeds. It is these same persons, occupying, if one may use the term, a sort of isolated niche, a middle state as it were, between the high order of tragedy and the rank and file of comedy, whom M. de la Chaussée has conceived as taking part in a plot that may sometimes have the interest of tragedy, and sometimes present situations in polite life between people of quality, and which thus preserves the character of comedy.

One of La Chaussée's lachrymose comedies picturing stiltedly the manners of a bygone day will not hold the attention of a modern audience, nor will Richardson's artless heroine do aught but make the modern novel reader yawn, unless he be a very young person sentimentally inclined, no adult modern reader being able to derive pleasure from four volumes treating, as Richardson expressed it, "of virtue rewarded in a series of familiar letters from a beautiful young damsel to her parents, published in order to cultivate the principles of virtue and religion in the minds of the youth of both sexes." The day of Pamela is passed. We are no longer interested in the trials of this child of fifteen, half servant, half adopted daughter of an old lady, who on the death of her mistress is exposed to the amorous importunities and persecutions of Mr. B——, her young mas-

ter. Though she loves Mr. B—— secretly in spite of his persecutions, and continues humble and devoted, even when her virtue is rewarded by his hand and heart, she will not awaken our jaded interest—except perhaps when venal Mrs. Jewkes introduces her importunate master in female disguise into her virginal bed. Equally are we bored by the didactic picture of the dismal consequences of blind and doting maternal love La Chaussée presents in *The School for Mothers* (*L'Ecole des mères*), although La Harpe called it "one of the best comedies of the eighteenth century." [5]

Yet, stilted as are the novels of the one and the comedies of the other, Richardson and La Chaussée played leading and similar rôles in literature, Richardson being the first novelist to tell a consistent story of the life about him in a popular way, and La Chaussée, the first dramatist to unify the elements of tragedy and comedy in plays dealing with persons and events of his own times, a form that is essentially the drama of our day as distinguished from pure comedy and boisterous farce. Whenever a play of to-day makes us both laugh and weep, or only weep, if its characters and scenes are familiar, it is a *comédie larmoyante,* or *drame,* as the French soon began to style La Chaussée's dramatic form.[6] Still there is danger in

[5] *Cours de littérature.*

[6] Goldoni says that his *Pamela* is "a *drame* according to the French definition of the term"; Beaumarchais states that "the *drame* holds a place between heroic tragedy and merry comedy," from which it appears that this term soon supplanted both *comédie larmoyante* and *tragédie bourgeoise* in describing this stage form.

giving entire credit to La Chaussée for the conception of lachrymose comedy. His contemporaries proclaimed him the inventor of this form and he has been so considered by succeeding generations; yet Gustave Larroumet[7] disputes this honour for Marivaux, whom he declares to be the author of "an excellent bourgeois drama, without the exaggerations or shortcomings of either La Chaussée or Diderot."[8]

This digression has been necessary for a clearer understanding of Goldoni's *Pamela Unmarried,* the plot of which was taken from the earlier scenes of Richardson's first novel; for, in dramatizing this pathetic story of love and persecution, the characters of which vary in social degree from the well born hero to the low born heroine, he was compelled by the very subject he had chosen to write a *comédie larmoyante,* or *drame,* such as La Chaussée had but a little while before put upon the Parisian stage. Moreover, Richardson's text brought him under the didactically sentimental influence of northern Europe, thereby making him forswear his own naturalism, his *Pamela* being so unlike his spontaneous and true pictures of Venetian life that it is difficult to recognize it as the work of this painter of nature, so untrue are its characters, so artificial is its language.

Goldoni's account of *Pamela* and of the causes that induced him to write it, presents so clearly

[7] *Marivaux, sa vie et ses œuvres.*

[8] *La Mère confidente* produced in 1735. La Chaussée's first play, *La Fausse antipathie,* appeared two years earlier: Goldoni's *Pamela nubile* in 1750.

its stilted plot that it may interest, not only as a proof of how far this merry Venetian had been led away from the true path of his genius, but as an example of his artless way of talking about his work, and of the nervous and careless style of his memoirs as well, the paragraphing and punctuation of the original being here retained intact:

The novel of *Pamela* had been for some time delighting Italy, and my friends were tormenting me by insisting that I should make a comedy from it.

I knew that work; I had no difficulty in catching the spirit of it, and would not find it hard to reassemble its component parts; but the moral goal of the English author did not fit the laws and manners of my country.

In London a lord does not disparage his nobility by marrying a peasant woman; in Venice a patrician who weds a plebeian girl, deprives his children of patrician rank, and they lose their right of inheritance.

Comedy, which is or should be the school for morals, must not expose human foibles except to correct them, and one is bound not to risk sacrificing a helpless posterity under the guise of rewarding virtue.

Therefore I had resisted the charm of this novel; but seeing that I must ever be on the watch for new material, and surrounded as I was, both at Mantua and in Venice, by people who urged me to dramatize it, I consented willingly enough.

I did not, however, begin the work until I had thought out a dénouement which, far from being dangerous, might serve as a model to virtuous lovers and at the same time render the catastrophe more pleasant and interesting.

Pamela begins the play in a scene with Jevre (Mrs. Jewkes), a former housekeeper of the family; she is regretting the loss of her mistress, deceased a few months before, and she informs the audience of her own condition. She is a village girl whom Milady had taken into her household as a chambermaid; but whom

she loved as her own child, and to whom she had given an education above her station. The conversation turns on the son of the deceased mistress: Jevre inspires Pamela with the hope that Lord Bonfil (Mr. B——) will not forget his mother's recommendations in regard to her: Pamela shows in broken words and sighs, her inclination for her young master: she wishes to leave London, she wishes to go back to the bosom of her family; it is the struggle between love and virtue.

In the course of the play, the young lord is seen to burn with the same fire as Pamela; she is virtuous; he makes efforts to subdue her to his wishes; Pamela remains strong, Milord is furious.

Lady Dauvre, Lord Bonfil's sister, notices the passion of her brother; she demands Pamela from him; Bonfil hesitates at first; he consents, then withdraws his consent; he imprisons Pamela; he is greatly agitated.

Lord Arthur, his friend, comes to see him; he notices his grief; he tries to cheer him; he proposes three different matches to him; Bonfil does not think them to his liking.

Another scene takes place between these two friends, which is a sort of discussion on the choice of a wife, on English liberty, and on the drawbacks of marriages unequal in regard to property.

This last point makes an impression on Bonfil's mind; he is struck with it, but he cannot make up his mind to give up Pamela.

The latter had written to her father, and had told him of her embarrassing position and her fears: this father arrives; he introduces himself to Milord and demands his daughter; Milord refuses to give her back to him; Andreuve (this is the old man's name) asks Milord seriously what his views are in regard to his daughter: Milord acknowledges his passion; he loves Pamela; and would only be too happy if he could make her his wife; it is not interestedness that restrains him; it is his condition, his birth. The old man touched by the sentiments of Milord, and seeing his opportunity to establish his daughter's happiness, confides to him his secret; Andreuve is not his name; he is the Count of Auspingh, a Scotchman, who, during the revolutions in that kingdom, was counted as one of the rebels against the British Crown, he escaped over the mountains, and bought with the little money which he had left enough land to cultivate and to live upon; he

has proofs of his former station, and quotes living witnesses who can identify him.

Milord Bonfil examines the papers, sees the witnesses, solicits the pardon of the outlawed man, and obtains it without difficulty; he marries Pamela; behold virtue rewarded, and the proprieties saved.

The most singular thing about this play, is that after the recognition scene,[9] where, according to the rules of the art, the action should terminate, there are ten scenes, which instead of boring people, amuse as much as the preceding ones, and perhaps still more.

Pamela does not know what has happened between Bonfil and her father; she does not know of her new station in life, she is ready to leave her lover; he takes pleasure in teasing her: he is going to be married: he will marry the Countess of Auspingh; he praises her: Pamela suffers, her father arrives, he encourages her to embrace Milord: Pamela is at sea; an attempt is made to explain the situation to her; she cannot believe the thing possible; Jevre salutes her as her mistress, Lady Dauvre calls to pay her respects: at last Pamela is assured of her happiness: she remains modest and grateful; she is changed in station, but not in character.

Until now I have not mentioned a personage who enlivens the seriousness of the play considerably; this is the Chevalier Ernold,[10] a nephew of Lady Dauvre, a young Englishman who has just returned from a trip through Europe, and who, for lack of principles and instruction, has brought back with him all the ridiculous mannerisms current in the countries through which he has travelled.

The only scene in this old-fashioned comedy drama

[9] A scene in which the position of the persons concerned in the action is changed with regard to one another by the unexpected revival of an old and unimportant relation between them, unknown theretofore, and which produces friendship—or hate—between the persons. The French text has *agnition* (Latin *agnitio*, from *agnoscere*), a rare word now replaced by *reconnaissance*. Aristotle calls such a scene the *anagnorisis*.

[10] The spelling "Hernold" of the Memoirs has been changed to "Ernold" to conform with the spelling in the play.

which is illuminated by the light of Goldoni's mirthful genius occurs when the shallow and affected Chevalier Ernold of whom he here speaks, calls on Lord Bonfil, and finding him taking tea with his friends, Lord Arthur and Lord Coubrech, thus turns the conversation to his own travels:

ERNOLD

I can't stay in London any more. Oh, what a fine thing travel is! How delightful to change from one country or nation to another; to-day here, to-morrow there, seeing the magnificent entertainments, the splendid courts, the abundance of merchandise, the crowds of people, the sumptuousness of the buildings. What would you have me do in London?

ARTHUR

London is not a city that need give way so easily to another.

ERNOLD

Oh, pardon me; you know nothing about it. You have not seen Paris, Madrid, Rome, Lisbon, Vienna, Florence, Milan, Venice. Believe me you know nothing about it.

BONFIL

A prudent traveller never runs down his own country. Chevalier, will you take tea?

ERNOLD

No, thank you; I've drunk chocolate. In Spain they drink delicious chocolate. Also in Italy its use is rather common, but without vanilla, or at least with very little vanilla, and above all other cities Milan excels in this respect. In Venice they drink exquisite coffee, genuine Alexandrian coffee, and they make it there to perfection. Then, Naples carries off the palm with its sherbets; they have exquisite flavours; and what is important for the health, they are made with snow, not with ice. Every city has its peculiar preëminence: Vienna is noted for its great entertainments, and Paris—oh, my dear Paris!—for its gallantry, its love-making. How delightful to meet without raising prudish

suspicions! How delightful to love without the demon of jealousy! Festivals always, gardens everywhere, amusements, pastimes, and dancing for ever! Oh, what lovely people! Oh, what pleasures, surpassing all the pleasures in the world!

BONFIL

(*Calls.*) Ho, there!

ISACCO (*a servant*)

Yes, sir.

BONFIL

Bring the chevalier a glass of water.

ERNOLD

Why do you order a glass of water for me?

BONFIL

I fear that so much talking has dried your throat.

ERNOLD

No, no; spare yourself the trouble. Since I left London, I have learned how to talk.

BONFIL

It's easier to learn to talk than to be silent.

ERNOLD

It's not so easy to learn to talk well.

BONFIL

But he who talks too much cannot always talk well.

ERNOLD

My dear sir, you have not travelled.

BONFIL

And you make me lose the wish to travel.

ERNOLD

Why?

BONFIL

Because I fear I also should acquire prejudices.

ERNOLD

A remarkable prejudice is the display which some people make of rigorous gravity. A man should be sociable, agreeable. The

world is made for those who know how to understand it, for those who know how to enjoy its honest pleasures. What is the use of your gloom? If you are talking you say ten words an hour; if you take a walk, more often than not you like to be alone; if you make love, you want to be understood without speaking; if you go to the theatre where grand opera is given, you go there to weep, and you are allured only by the pathetic song that excites hypochondria. English comedies are critical, instructive, full of fine characters, good sallies of wit; but they do not arouse laughter. In Italy at least you may enjoy delightful and witty comedies. Oh, if you could see what a fine mask Harlequin is! It is a sin that we Englishmen will not endure the mask on the London stage. If Harlequin could be introduced into our comedies, it would be the most delightful thing in the world! This fellow represents a stupid servant, but at the same time an astute one. He wears a very funny mask, is dressed in a suit of many colours, and makes you split your sides with laughing. Believe me, friends; if you saw him you would be forced to laugh in spite of all your gravity. He says some very witty things. Just listen to some of the witticisms I have remembered: Instead of *patron,* he says *poltroon;* and instead of *doctor,* he says *dolorus.* He calls a *bonnet* a *bell,* and a *letter* a *litter.* He is always talking about eating, and is saucy to all the women. He beats his master horribly.

ARTHUR

(*Rises.*) My lord and friends, good-bye. (*Exit.*)

ERNOLD

Are you going? I've just remembered a delightful one which can't help making you laugh. One evening, in a single comedy, Harlequin, in order to deceive an old man whose name was Pantaloon, transformed himself into a Moor, a moving statue, and a skeleton, and at the end of all his knavery he treated the good old man to a drubbing.

COUBRECH

(*Rises.*) My friend, by your leave; I cannot endure any more. (*Exit.*)

ERNOLD

(*To Bonfil.*) Now you see what it means not to have travelled.

BONFIL

Chevalier, if that makes you laugh, I don't know what to think of you. You can't make me believe that in Italy sensible men laugh at such tomfoolery. Laughter is natural to man, but all men don't laugh for the same reason. There is worthy fun aroused by word-play, sharp sallies, or witty and brilliant conceits. There is base laughter, born of scurrility and stupidity. Allow me to speak to you with the freedom with which a kinsman, a friend, may speak. You have travelled prematurely; your travels should have been preceded by the best of studies: history, chronology, sketching, mathematics, and good philosophy are the branches of knowledge necessary to a traveller. Chevalier, if you had studied them before leaving London, your mind would not have been arrested by the entertainments of Vienna, the gallantry of Paris, the harlequinades of Italy. (*Exit.*)

ERNOLD

My lord, you don't know what is proper to say; you say that because you have not travelled. (*Exit.*) [11]

Aside from its literary interest as a dramatization of the first popular novel, couched in a dramatic form that has been used by nearly every subsequent writer of serious prose drama, *Pamela* is noteworthy because of the unusual boldness displayed by timid Goldoni in attacking the social problems of his day. To quote Professor Ortolani: [12]

The great problem of the eighteenth century, whether or not the social privilege of birth and blood should prevail over natural laws, was here put into action and solved, at least in the minds of the spectators. Pamela conquered; Bonfil was unable either to

[11] Act I, Scene 16.

[12] *Opere complete di Carlo Goldoni,* Vol. V, *nota storica.*

seduce or banish her; Madame Jevre ingenuously anticipated the theories of J. J. Rousseau, the public wept and applauded.

The passage in which Rousseau is heralded is perhaps the most remarkable to be found in any of Goldoni's comedies, since even before the Citizen of Geneva began to voice the rights of man,[13] this Venetian bourgeois, whose conservatism is so frequently expressed by his hide-bound Pantalone, placed the following radical sentiments on the lips of lord Bonfil's housekeeper, in a scene in which she discusses with a friend of that nobleman her master's intentions of marrying the virtuous Pamela:[14]

> That one should die to preserve one's honour I understand, but that it should be a dishonour to marry a poor but honest girl I do not see at all. I have often heard it said that the world would be more beautiful if it had not been spoiled by men, who for the sake of pride have upset the beautiful order of Nature. That common mother regards us all as equal, though the arrogance of the great does not deign to consider the small. The day will come, however, when one pudding will again be made of both great and small.

Nowhere in his comedies does Molière express such radical sentiments as these, for in his day inequality was accepted as an unalterable law of nature. That peaceful Goldoni should have uttered a doctrine so revolutionary long before he had met

[13] *Pamela* (1750) was presented the same year in which was published Rousseau's first *discours* (*Si le rétablissement des sciences et des arts a contribué à épurer les mœurs*), but his *discours, Sur l'origine et les fondements de l'inégalité parmi les hommes* was not published until 1755, and the *Contrat social* not until 1762.

[14] Act III, Scene 3.

either Rousseau or Voltaire, or been brought directly under French influence—uttered it, too, in a Venetian theatre where the patricians spat from their boxes upon the vulgar herd below in the pit, is an astounding fact that baffles all explanation, unless it be that he had read Voltaire's *Nanine,* a play also founded upon Richardson's *Pamela,* in which the Sage of Ferney voices the following democratic views:

THE COUNT

. . . . . .

You like magnificence; you think that greatness
Lies in armorial bearings: its abode
I seek within the heart. . . .

THE BARONESS

. . . . . .

Do you owe nothing, please you, sir, to rank?

THE COUNT

My duty lies in being a gentleman.

THE BARONESS

My birth demands a higher character.

THE COUNT

Mine's higher still: it braves the vulgar crowd.

THE BARONESS

You'd strip us even of our quality.

THE COUNT

Nay; thus I'd dignify our humankind.[15]

Goldoni expresses these very sentiments in *Pamela,* when the virtuous heroine says to her master: "Noble blood is an accident of birth; noble actions char-

[15] *Nanine,* Act I, Scene 1.

acterize the nobleman." Indeed, as Signor Falchi justly exclaims, "What is there in Voltaire's declarations that is not to be found in Pamela's words, and how far removed are Voltaire's words from the concise revolutionary conception Goldoni presented in Madame Jevre's speech!" [16] Three or four years later Goldoni gave utterance to radical views, yet only in a satirical vein.[17] In *Pamela,* however, he appears as the sincere tribune of humanity, albeit only in a speech or two of this super-sentimental comedy.

Indeed, aside from its historical interest and its outburst of radicalism, there is little in *Pamela Unmarried* to hold the modern reader's attention, in spite of the fact that Signor Galanti calls it "a true jewel," [18] and Professor Ortolani pronounces its heroine "such a sweet and delicate girlish figure that she deserves a place of her own on the stage." [19] Her place is rather in the museum of literary antiques, where the student may view her in a leisurely way, while he who seeks diversion may pass her by hastily, wondering meantime how such a smug little Miss Innocence could have amused the people of even a bygone day. She was not conceived by Goldoni, and sentimental didacticism was not his natural bent; else his fame would now be dimmed by that of La Chaussée, whose lachrymose style he emulated in this in-

[16] Op. cit.
[17] *Il Filosofo inglese.*
[18] Op. cit.
[19] *Opere complete di Carlo Goldoni.* Vol. V, *nota storica.*

stance, even though he did not, like Diderot, proclaim it as his own invention.[20]

In *Pamela Married* (*Pamela maritata*), the play Goldoni wrote nine years later for the actors of the Capranica theatre in Rome, he presents the matrimonial troubles of Richardson's sentimental heroine; Lord Bonfil's jealousy of his friend Lord Arthur, incited by that travelled bore, the Chevalier Ernold, because he had been soundly snubbed by Pamela, being the thread on which hangs an attenuated plot. Goldoni says that "this play had more study and finesse than *Pamela Unmarried,* but the latter had more interest and action, the one being written for the theatre, the other for the closet," an opinion with which one has no desire to quarrel, virtuous Pamela's married adventures, like those of virtuous Bettina,[21] being less interesting by far than the events which led to her marriage.

Some years after the production of *Pamela Unmarried,* Goldoni placed upon the Venetian boards *A Curious Mishap* (*Un Curioso accidente*), an exotic comedy inspired, he informs us, by "a strange and amusing adventure" that happened to a prominent Dutch merchant, the facts of which were told him by this merchant's Venetian correspondents. The story of this play concerns the secret love of Lieutenant de la Cotterie, a wounded French prisoner of war,

[20] Diderot's "serious and moral" drama (*Le genre sérieux et honnête*) was in form, at least, merely the *comédie larmoyante* of La Chaussée, though its sermons were preached even more didactically.

[21] In *La Buona moglie,* the sequel to *La Putta onorata.*

for Giannina, daughter of a merchant of The Hague named Filiberto, in whose hospitable house the Frenchman lodges during his convalescence.

Far from suspecting the havoc Cupid has played in his household, Filiberto, hoodwinked by the lieutenant's valet in regard to the true state of affairs, plots to marry his French guest to Costanza, the daughter of a fellow-merchant named Riccardo, whose ingratitude for the start in life he once gave him makes Filiberto relish the notion of stealing his antagonist's daughter from under his nose. Costanza loves the lieutenant, so she falls a willing dupe to the plan. As the real lovers dare not avow their love, they pretend to acquiesce in fulfilling it, Giannina in particular torturing both the lieutenant and Costanza by her clever dissembling. Meanwhile Filiberto beards Riccardo, and upon his refusal to let his daughter marry a penniless Frenchman, admonishes that officer to marry the girl he loves without her father's consent, and actually lends him money for that purpose. He soon rues this advice, for when his daughter hears from his own lips that he has counselled M. de la Cotterie to wed in spite of a father's opposition, she promptly goes off to the house of an aunt and marries him herself, thus administering to Filiberto the very medicine he has prescribed for a rival in business, whose subsequent gloating piques him into forgiving his wayward child.

Although the scene of *A Curious Mishap* is laid in Holland, it is purely a comedy of intrigue con-

structed upon conventional lines, in which there is no atmospheric fidelity or naturalistic characterization, such as Goldoni presents so frequently in his Venetian comedies. Yet its plot is so cleverly woven and its tale of love's triumph so sympathetic that it still holds the interest of an audience; for, when it was presented a few years ago (1907-1908) in Chicago and throughout the northwestern States by Mr. Donald Robertson, this excellent actor found that it interested the average play-goer more than any of the plays of Molière, Calderon, Ibsen, Browning, and others, presented by him at that time. When *A Curious Mishap* was played in France, however, during its author's lifetime, it proved a failure, an undutiful daughter being antipathetic in France, and a marriage on the spur of the moment impossible in a country where, both legally and sentimentally, parents are honoured more rigorously than elsewhere. That Goldoni was himself doubtful of the moral effect of this play, even in Italy, is shown when the heroine, after obtaining parental forgiveness for her runaway marriage and confessing that she has exceeded the limits of duty and family respect, asks the "kind spectators" not to follow her bad example, but to "let the fruits of the performance be a warning to their families."

In *The Scotch Girl* (*La Scozzese*), the fourth of his exotic comedies in prose, written in 1761, Goldoni appears as an adapter, the original inspiration being, as he frankly acknowledges, Voltaire's *comédie lar-*

moyanīe of the same name (*L'Ecossaise*), produced in Paris during the previous year. Indeed, Voltaire's piece proved so popular that three Venetian versions were presented almost simultaneously. Of these, Goldoni's alone was successful, a bit of good fortune due to his knowledge of stage-craft, his piece being dramatically superior to its original.

In Voltaire's romantic comedy, Lindane, the heroine, is the daughter of a Scotch nobleman, whose father had fled from Scotland years before the play begins because of a charge of treason malevolently brought against him by a lifelong enemy. Coming to London in search of her father, Lindane lodges at good Maître Fabrice's inn, where she is tenderly cared for by the innkeeper and his wife, and where she meets and falls in love with Lord Murray, the son of her father's enemy, and is loved by him. Although this young nobleman, on learning the identity of his inamorata, seeks to right the wrong his dead father had done, Voltaire's dramaturgy is so clumsy that he does not permit this hero to appear until the fourth act of the play. Meanwhile a letter he has written to Lindane telling her of his constant affection for her, is intercepted by Lady Alton, a jealous villainess who not only convinces Lindane of Lord Murray's infidelity, but with the aid of the false testimony of Frélon, a pamphleteer, succeeds in obtaining a warrant for her Scotch rival's arrest as a treasonable suspect. Meeting the police officer who comes to serve it, Freeport, a worthy merchant, goes

surety for Lindane and obtains her release on bail without her knowing the danger that has threatened her. In the meantime, her father arrives at the inn, bent on revenge for the wrongs that have befallen him at the hands of the elder Lord Murray. Meeting by chance the fair countrywoman who is his fellow-lodger, he questions her and learns that she is his daughter; whereupon young Lord Murray appears and convinces Lindane of his fidelity. The father, on learning the young nobleman's identity, draws his sword to attack him, but instead of defending himself, Murray throws away his weapon and pulls from his pocket the pardon for his opponent which he has obtained from the King, this act of magnanimity bringing tears of gratitude to the proscribed Scotchman's eyes, and a happy termination to the play.

Goldoni retained the essential elements of Voltaire's story, yet built a more coherent play, his wider dramatic experience having taught him the value of what the late M. Sarcey called *scènes à faire,* or necessary scenes that must be acted and not related in narrative by the actors. Thus, instead of making the love of Lord Murray and Lindane a fact told the audience when the play begins, the Venetian shows this love in its contrariety as well as in its culmination, he being too deft a dramatist to repeat Voltaire's amateurish mistake of leaving the romance of a romantic play to the imagination of his audience. Moreover, with perhaps the single exception of Frélon, whom Vol-

taire conceived *con odio* to satirize his journalistic enemy Fréron, and therefore drew trenchantly, Goldoni's characters are more thoroughly and consistently developed, his play being humanely as well as technically superior to its prototype. Still, howsoever commendable his version is as a piece of stage carpentry, it is at best a play outside the pale of his peculiar genius, and, like *Pamela,* made interesting chiefly by its historical relation to eighteenth century literature.

Although Goldoni frankly acknowledged that his *Scotch Girl* was merely an Italian version of Voltaire's play, and did not so much as hint that the latter had shown an undue familiarity with his own comedies, Fréron, the pamphleteer, satirized by Voltaire under the thinly disguised name of Frélon, charged this bitter enemy with having plagiarized his play, largely from *The Cavalier and the Lady* and *The Coffee-House.* It is true that certain elements of these comedies appear in the French piece, the scene, for instance, being the London coffee-house of Maître Fabrice, an honest innkeeper with a heart as kind as that of Ridolfo, his Venetian prototype. Lindane, too, the Scotch heroine, is as virtuous and proud as Donna Leonora, the heroine of *The Cavalier and the Lady;* and although she is the daughter instead of the wife of a proscribed nobleman, like Leonora, too, she supports her faithful maid and herself by her needle, and is too proud to accept financial aid from either Lord Murray, a lover as faultless as Don Ro-

drigo, the cavalier of Goldoni's play, or Freeport, a worthy English merchant who finds surreptitious means of aiding her, like the Anselmo of Goldoni. Moreover, Frélon, the pamphleteer of evil tongue, who makes Fabrice's coffee-house the headquarters for his malice and plotting, although he was immediately recognized by Parisians as a satire upon Fréron, is certainly suggestive of Don Marzio, the mischievous busy-body of *The Coffee-House*. Moreover, because "journalists were rare in Italy and the police prevented them from being mischievous," Goldoni in writing his version of Voltaire's play made Monsieur la Cloche, as he calls the character corresponding to Fréron, a gossipy meddler similar to Don Marzio. In the metamorphosis, however, he curtails him from a person of considerable importance in the unfolding of the plot to a mere character-bit entirely subservient to Lady Alton, the villainess, a woman, by the way, quite as worldly and unprincipled as Donna Claudia and the other birds of fashion in *The Cavalier and the Lady*. Yet, striking as the resemblance is between some of the characters of Voltaire's *Scotch Girl* and those to be found in two of Goldoni's comedies, the former's story is sufficiently new to absolve him from the charge of direct plagiarism, the most that may be said being that he conceived his play after having read Goldoni.

Bathetic romanticism such as is to be found in *The Scotch Girl* is so alien to Goldoni's genius that it is a pleasure to turn to his three comedies of army life,

all of which were inspired by his own experience and observation. Although they are not precisely exotic in character, they paint neither the life of the aristocracy, the bourgeoisie, nor the proletariat of Venice; therefore they fall more within the province of this chapter than within that of any other of the present work, so that a word here regarding them should not be amiss.

The Swindler (*L'Impostore*), one of these military plays, was intended, so Goldoni says, to "efface from his mind the blackness a rascal's wickedness had imprinted there," its protagonist being a portrait of the Ragusan captain, who had fleeced him out of six thousand livres under the pretence of raising a regiment for foreign service. In his memoirs, he states that he wrote this comedy for use in a Jesuit college at Venice, while he tarried in Bologna during the summer of 1743, after being forced to leave his native city largely because of the Ragusan's rascality, yet Professor Maddalena maintains [22] that more than ten years elapsed between the time of his duplicity and his portrayal upon the stage, Goldoni having apparently used considerable poetic license in his memoirs, in order to heighten the dramatic effect of the tale.

Howsoever this may be, *The Swindler* is a picaresque comedy, in which the four Venetian masks appear, Orazio Sbocchia, the swindler who gives it a name, being a military deserter drawn from the rascal who had defrauded its author, all the details of the

[22] *Opere complete di Carlo Goldoni.* Vol. IX, *nota storica.*

swindle being set forth in the play, although the cheat, instead of escaping, is arrested and handed over to the authorities. It was written, Goldoni tells us, "with all the warmth his indignation could possibly inspire," neither his brother being spared, "whom he portrayed in vivid colours," nor himself, "whose simplicity he clothed with all the ridicule it deserved." The play is slight, however, in dramatic fibre, its merit lying mainly in its amusing *lazzi,* wherein Brighella, a pretended sergeant, chouses Arlecchino, an innkeeper, out of food and drink for himself and the yokels he has induced to enlist in Orazio Sbocchia's fictitious regiment. Indeed, it is interesting chiefly because of its biographical aspect and the fact that it is a play without a female part; for, although rich Pantalone's daughter is sought in marriage by the protagonist, she does not appear. Goldoni thus thoroughly fulfilled his agreement to write "a comedy for a Jesuit school, without a female rôle and adaptable to military exercises on the part of the students."

As its name implies, *The Military Lover* (*L'Amante militare*) tells a story of love and war, its hero, Don Alonso, being a young Spanish ensign who has lost his heart to Rosaura, the daughter of Pantalone, a worthy merchant in whose house he is quartered. The villain is Don Garzia, a profligate brother-officer, who, besides jilting an adoring widow, makes love to every wearer of a petticoat that crosses his path, and so insults Rosaura with his cava-

lier attentions that Don Alonso challenges him. Their duel results in this hero's arrest, together with the loss of his quarters in the house of his inamorata, his enemy being installed there in his stead by order of the commanding general. Upon regaining his freedom Don Alonso again provokes Don Garzia; but, though that wretch's pistol misses fire, he generously spares his life. When peace is declared and the troops depart for home, Don Alonso resigns his commission to wed the faithful Rosaura, astute Pantalone, her father, being averse to a military son-in-law who will desert the hearthside whenever duty calls.

"I painted in Don Alonso," Goldoni tells us, "the upright and intelligent officers I had known, and in Don Garzia I copied those who permit themselves the heedlessness of youth," Don Garzia, to quote his own words, being "a lover of women, friends, horses, the bottle, good living, and a hundred other things." Yet, well contrasted as are the hero and villain of this comedy, its author's real genius shines only in the *lazzi* between Brighella, a hectoring sergeant, and Arlecchino, a raw recruit, particularly when the latter, disguised in one of his sweetheart's dresses, deserts the colours after a sound beating for insubordination, only to be caught, sentenced to be shot, and reprieved while the muskets of the firing squad are being levelled at his dull head.

In the comedy drama entitled *War* (*La Guerra*), there are no *lazzi* and no mask characters, this play

being more serious in tone and far more naturalistic than its predecessor. Its scene is the camp of an army investing a fortified place; the siege of Pizzighettone, at which Goldoni had been present in 1733, furnishing the material. Its story concerns the mutual love of Don Faustino, a young ensign in the beleaguering army, and Donna Florida, a prisoner in its camp as well as the daughter of the general commanding the invested fortress; yet its charm lies far more in its spirited pictures of camp life and excellent characterizations than in its romantic plot.

We see officers, more intent on winning ducats or hearts than battles, gambling and making love on the eve of an assault; we see a venal commissary, who began life as a muleteer, lending them money at usurious rates and, aided by a conscienceless vivandière, selling inferior goods at double prices to their men; we see the rank and file despoiling innocent country girls of their poultry and eggs, and libertine superiors enticing them to their quarters. From the rapacious camp we are taken to the grim battle-field and shown the invested fortress with breached walls and the besiegers marshalled for the assault. A white flag flutters on the ramparts, and Don Egidio, the general commanding the fortress, comes forth to parley. His terms for surrender are the full honours of war; and when these are refused, he goes courageously back to defend his shattered walls, but not until he has met the young enemy who loves his daughter and has chivalrously accorded him her hand in the

event that the lover shall survive until peace is declared. The drums beat, the trumpets sound the charge, but, just as the cannon are trained and the matches lighted, a courier gallops breathless upon the scene with the news of peace, the horrors of war being too foreign to Goldoni's kind heart to permit him to display them. Nor could the glitter of war blind his clear vision to its rapacity and meanness; witness these words of his venal commissary, fattening like a leech on the blood of others:

Oh, what a fine thing is war! I shall ever speak well of it, and there is no danger of a desire for peace escaping from my heart. Any one who hears me might say: "You pray for your calling, like the wife of the public torturer who asked Heaven to increase her husband's business!" Well, who in the world does not seek his advantage before all else? Lawsuits give the lawyers their living and illness gives the doctors theirs; yet where is the doctor or the lawyer who would wish all men to be well and all families peaceful? If there were no wars there would be no commissaries; and who is the man that, being able to put aside a hundred thousand *scudi* during four or five years of war, would for love of his neighbour desire peace? Those who see their lands devastated wail against war; not those who, to provision the army, sell at high prices their corn and their wine. The merchants who suffer the damage of interrupted business complain of war; not those who supply the soldiers' needs and make on their goods twenty or thirty per cent. Those families who unluckily lose a father, a son, or a kinsman, weep over war; not those who see them returning home rich in glory and laden with booty. Sometimes the soldiers and the officers, too, who suffer from lack of necessities, complain of war, but certainly a commissary like me does not complain, who, swimming in prosperity, profits by sales and provisions, and whose brains make the gold and silver of everyone in the army filter into his pockets.

The camp-followers in this military play are thieves and usurers, the officers and soldiers mostly rakes and plunderers; for, while there are a few brave men among them, such as Don Alonso, the hero, and intrepid Don Egidio, to temper the depravity and sordidness of the picture, they do not overshadow its cruel truth. The soldiers that overran Italy then, whether French, Austrian, Spanish, or Piedmontese, were hirelings officered by dissolute nobles to whom war meant the gratification of their lusts—officers who, like the titled lieutenant of this play, would gamble their last gold piece away on the eve of battle, then drain a bumper of burgundy and shout: "Long live war, long live love, long live good wine and fair women!" Such an army Goldoni portrays in his comedy-drama, *War*—an army of soldiers who pillage, officers who dissipate, and commissaries who steal. He had been on the field of battle and in the camp; he had even been despoiled of all his possessions by the stragglers of just such an army as he here depicts. Small wonder that this clear-sighted naturalist should have robbed war of its glamour!

XII

RIVALS AND CRITICS

LIKE Molière, the master mind of comedy, indeed like nearly every dramatist of note, Goldoni was malignantly assailed during his lifetime by rivals and critics. Being a peaceful, as well as a kindly man, he never provoked a quarrel; yet during the years when he wrote for the Venetian stage, there was scarcely a time when some competitor of inferior talent was not conspiring to wean the public from him, or some petty caviller traducing him. Occasionally, when brought to bay, he turned upon his enemies; but he never retorted in the billingsgate of their attacks upon him: in truth, no better proof that Goldoni was at heart a gentleman need be adduced than to tell of his affrays with critics and rivals, among whom Carlo Gozzi, the most ribald and abusive, was a gentleman by birth.

To the "ill-conceived zeal" of his friends Goldoni ascribes the asperity of foes, who were provoked to attack him because "his partisans exalted the merits of his plays too highly." In his memoirs he pays marked tribute to his defenders; yet he is singularly silent regarding his enemies. Though in all probability his defeat in the long war Carlo Gozzi waged

against him drove him in chagrin to a foreign land, not once does he speak of this crabbed rival, or his vitriolic attacks, "expressive silence" being his meet revenge. It becomes necessary, therefore, to trace the story of his literary quarrels in the writings of his enemies. Of these there is no dearth, Venice being then the printer's paradise, where booksellers sold their wares by weight, while venders of pamphlets hawked theirs through the streets.

At the corner book-shop or the coffee-house old fogies with manuscript protruding from the tail-pockets of their coats, glossologists, romancers, poets, lexicographers, wits, purists, encyclopædists and gazetteers, each with a belief in himself and a contempt for his rival, talked literature and pinched snuff from morn till night, or read the *Gazzetta Veneta.* When the light grew too dim for their old eyes to see print, they sauntered forth to the Sant' Angelo or the San Luca to witness the latest comedy; and when the curtain had fallen, they carried the acerbity of their disputes concerning it to the *Ridotto,* where, between their *coups* at faro, they averred that Goldoni had emptied his bag. Most men without a lucrative occupation, if they were not beggars or thieves, were writers earning what they could by penning occasional verse and dedications—a slice of bread, mayhap, with a cup of chocolate—or, if the patron were noble, a pair of cuff-buttons, a silver breakfast service. There were poets who starved in garrets and poets who lolled in palaces, and though some wore

threadbare coats and others silken robes, so many reams of verse were written by them that sonnets were blown hither and thither by the wind, while Gozzi reckoned that a cobbler got more for a stitch than a poet for a line. Small wonder, therefore, that successful Goldoni should have been the target for jealous shafts.

No sooner did he appear in Venice as the playwright of Imer's troupe, than a colleague in the law, named Gori, who was a comic poet, too, "set out to persecute him, even before he began to write," [1] and to plagiarize his work as well; but not until he returned to Venice in 1748 with Medebac's provincial players did serious hostilities with rivals and critics break out. *Elegant Anthony* was considered "too true and pungent," Goldoni declares; *The Prudent Man* "had as much guile as discretion." Pancrazio in *The Venetian Twins* "was a character to be condemned," while the newly arrived players, since several of them had been performers on the tight-rope, were dismissed as "a troupe of funambulists." These patronizing strictures gave place to vehemence, however, when *The Artful Widow* carried the town by storm, and no sooner had this sprightly comedy scored a palpable hit than, to arrest the rising tide of the newcomers' fortunes, the comedians of the San Samuele staged *The School for Widows* (*La Scuola delle vedove*), the première of which Goldoni thus describes:

[1] Preface to Vol. XIII, Pasquali edition.

Some one had told me it was to be a parody on my play. Not at all; it was my *Widow* herself: the four foreigners of the same nations, the same plot and the same procedure. Only the dialogue was changed, and that was filled with invectives and insults, directed at my players and me. An actor would deliver a few phrases of my original; another would add: *"Stupidities, stupidities!"* They would repeat some clever sayings, some jokes from my piece, then cry in chorus: *"Nonsense, nonsense!"* This work did not cost the author much trouble; he had followed my plot and my method, and his style was no happier than mine; yet, applause burst forth from all sides; the gibes, the satirical shafts were emphasized by laughter, by shouts of *bravo,* by continuous hand-claps; I was in my box, covered by my mask; I kept my silence, and called the public ungrateful.

That public was not his public, however, as he soon discovered, the theatre being packed with the adherents of rival troupes. He had vowed never to reply to critics, yet he thought it "would be cowardly not to arrest this torrent that threatened to destroy him"; therefore, hastening home, he plied his pen "with rancour" throughout the night, until he had composed a dialogue for three characters entitled, *An Apologetic Prologue for the Artful Widow* (*Prologo apologetico della vedova scaltra*). Seizing upon certain passages in *The School for Widows,* in which foreigners were handled in a way contrary to the delicacy with which they were treated by the authorities, he endeavoured in this jeremiad, so he says, to show the need for a police censorship of plays.

When warned by Senator Antonio Condulmer, his manager's patron, that if he published this *Prologue,*

he would incur the displeasure of the authorities, Goldoni replied that if the government interfered, he would go to some foreign country and issue it there. Upon its appearance he had three thousand copies of it distributed gratis in the theatres, coffee-houses, and *casini* of Venice. Two days later, he says, the State Inquisitors forbade the further performance of *The School for Widows,* his own *Artful Widow* "going on her way more brilliantly and more affluently than ever." [2] "If the reader is curious to know the author of *The School for Widows,*" he continues, "I cannot satisfy him, for I shall never mention by name the persons who have intended to do me evil." The late Hermann von Löhner, however, unearthed among the annotations of the State Inquisitors [3] the name of the author of *The School for Widows,* who was none other than the Abate Pietro Chiari, for many years Goldoni's rival for the favour of the Venetian public, until Carlo Gozzi's attacks on both made allies of these contending dramatists.

Although Chiari had perhaps as many contemporary partisans as Goldoni, his name survives only because it was linked with that of his great rival during the dramatic war that was waged for years in Venice between the forces of theatrical reform, led by Goldoni, and the defenders of the Improvised Comedy of whom, as we shall see, Carlo Gozzi was

[2] Giuseppe Ortolani (op. cit.) says the performances of *La Vedova scaltra* were stopped, as well as those of its parody.

[3] *Archivio Veneto,* Vol. XXIII.

the resourceful and unprincipled leader. Before he stood shoulder to shoulder with him against the attacks of Gozzi, Goldoni fought Chiari valiantly. The latter, however, was the aggressor, and beneath his standard were enlisted the actors and managers of Venice with their friends and patrons, all of whom resented the success of Medebac's upstart troupe, made possible by its playwright's surpassing stagecraft.

About the time he attacked Goldoni in *The School for Widows,* Chiari made his Venetian début at the San Samuele theatre as the writer of a comedy,[4] the actors of that playhouse being apparently glad to welcome any one with the temerity to oppose Goldoni; for Chiari, it should be said, was a Brescian by birth and in Venice a new-comer. Once a Jesuit, he had been a Modenese schoolmaster, as well as a cardinal's secretary and an Arcadian poet, and when he appeared in Venice he became a vile plagiarist, not only Goldoni's plays, but also Costantini's *Critical Letters,* being filched by his unprincipled pen.

Chiari was essentially a man of the eighteenth century, grappling, like Voltaire, with all human knowledge; yet only in the wide range and voluminousness of his work does he resemble his great French contemporary. Although he produced tragedies, comedies, letters, satires, novels, philosophical, scientific, political, and ethical treatises, drawing-room dialogues, parodies, sonnets, and epithalamia, Chiari

[4] *L'Avventuriere alla moda,* which according to Giuseppe Ortolani was produced during the autumn of 1749.

was a literary charlatan without genuine ideals or ambitions, writing whatever would turn a penny. By crowing loudly in the literary barnyard, he managed to centre attention upon himself, even to the extent of stealing Goldoni's laurels as the reformer of Italian comedy. With his hand ever on the public's pulse, he prescribed the momentary stimulant that would quicken it. "An Italian without a country, a priest without religion, a writer without ideas,"[5] this Brescian ex-Jesuit plagiarized his way into popularity, and disputed with Goldoni the dramatic ascendency in Venice, his tenet being that "at public wells any one may draw water." From the Æneid alone he drew three plays, its hero becoming in his butchering hand a Captain Fracasso, Menelaus a doting pantaloon, and Helen a prattling gadabout.

But the best grist came to his mill from Goldoni's sprightly comedies; for whenever his brilliant rival staged a success, Chiari rushed an imitation on the boards of the San Samuele; thus to *Molière* he opposed *Molière, a Jealous Husband* (*Moliere, marito geloso*), clothed in the Martellian verse Goldoni had made popular. Not to be outdone by his rival's *Clever Woman*, Chiari produced a play of the same name, and contemporaneously with *Pamela* he placed upon his stage *Marianna; or, The Orphan* (*Marianna o sia l'Orfana*), his own lachrymose version of Richardson's novel. No sooner had *The Persian Bride* won a popular success by means of the

[5] Giuseppe Ortolani: op. cit.

sympathetic part of Hircana, the slave, than the Brescian was ready to court approval with a *Chinese Slave* (*La Schiava chinese*), while Goldoni's *English Philosopher* (*Il Filosofo inglese*) was quickly followed by a *Venetian Philosopher* (*Il Filosofo veneziano*) and his *Terence* by a *Plautus* (*Il Plauto*). Moreover, of the three versions of Voltaire's *Scotch Girl* that were staged contemporaneously in Venice, one, *The Fair Pilgrim* (*La Bella pellegrina*), was Chiari's.

Though a bad plagiarist, he understood his public. A man of debauched talent and with little skill in comedy, he set himself to the task of playwriting as to any other task, and because reform was in the air he posed as a reformer. "Perhaps," as Giulio Caprin says,[6] "he did not really love the stage, but his romantic imagination inspired comedies between the astounding and the pathetic which were not displeasing to the public." He was by his own confession "a merchant, not a pirate, who read the most celebrated authors not to pillage, but to imitate them."[7] Seldom, indeed, has a literary impostor victimized his contemporaries so thoroughly, for in Venice the charlatanism of this "dull and frantic abate," as Professor Ortolani styles Chiari, was confounded with Goldoni's art, a perversion of literary justice, due, it may be added, more to the age than to Venetian decadence.

The dramaturgic war that was declared when

[6] Op. cit.

[7] Preface to *La Vendetta amorosa*.

Chiari parodied *The Artful Widow,* waged fitfully for ten years, and reached its height when Goldoni left the Sant' Angelo theatre to work for its rival, the San Luca, since no sooner did Medebac learn of his dramatist's defection, than he engaged Chiari to fill his place. During the earlier years of these hostilities the laurels were with Goldoni. Hopeful, rich in imagination and experience, and sure, moreover, of the truth of his dramatic ideals, he believed in his ability to silence his enemies. At the very moment when failure threatened to engulf him, he vowed that he would write sixteen plays in a single year, and the fulfilment of that boast was his triumph, for then the public flocked to his standard, Chiari being forced to retire from the field to rally his shattered forces. But the pace Goldoni had set was too swift to be maintained, and the public he wrote for too fickle to remain loyal even to so valiant a hero; therefore, Chiari soon retrieved his fortunes and by imitating his rival was able to confound the issue and acclaim himself "the sole and true restorer of the Italian drama," though he condescendingly admitted that some credit for the reform might be given Goldoni.

Literary and social Venice became divided into two camps, the Chiaristas and the Goldonistas, who bombarded each other with pasquinades and pamphlets, the coffee-houses, the streets, and even the palaces being the scene of hostilities. Goldoni having painted them in their true colours, the women flocked to Chiari's standard, and in his ranks as well were

the poetasters and pamphleteers, some too dull to judge of merit; some, like foul-mouthed Giorgio Baffo, the licentious poet, talented enough to have seen the error of their ways. This rivalry between the two dramatists an anonymous rhymester of the day paints vividly in these verses, their contest for the favour of the public being likened to a regatta on the Grand Canal:

> Protection was Goldoni's gondola,
> A worthy bark, indeed, though rudderless;
> He is a man whose thoughts serve him as oars,—
> And he who lacks them, be it said, lacks much.
> Chiari's virtues answer as his craft;
> He rows not hard, yet rows. A sage is he,
> Who bravely writes. This stands him in good stead.
> One has more knack, the other takes more pains;
> Yet, rowing calls for strength as well as skill.
> Their moorings cast, Goldoni takes the lead,
> Ten boat-lengths in advance, as many said;
> By brawn Chiari would have forged ahead,
> Had not a racing-skiff opposed his course.
> It held him but a trice; his friends, because
> Goldoni leads, to his assistance rally.
> On, on Goldoni darts, straining his back.
> Chiari bravely spurts; in sad surprise
> Goldoni sees his hated rival bump
> His own bark's hastening poop with swifter prow.

This pleasing allegory represents the struggle of the earlier years, when Goldoni enjoyed the favour of the public, and Chiari was unable to equal him. Continuing in the same vein, the anonymous satirist describes the second stretch of the race. Here Chiari, by adopting his rival's methods, made his boat

"speed like an arrow," even though the world said that "to copy was to play the blockhead"; Chiari's retort being that a skilful imitation of a good original is not a copy, since he who imitates well the good work of wise men, is an artist and not a fool, his own imitations being as skilful as the work of a great painter who copies Titian. After this critical digression the allegory of the race is thus continued:

> Let us turn to the boats as they were left:
> Chiari now pulls on with speedier strokes;
> Goldoni's, fewer, longer, easier,
> And, equalling his foe's, as forceful are.
> The judge's stand is reached; yet neither leads.
> On both the red flag falls; and I am bound
> To say, the race is drawn, for both have won!

When at the height of his rivalry with his noted contemporary, Chiari made a triumphant visit to Modena in 1754, where he had formerly been a schoolmaster, and there he was acclaimed the reformer of the Italian stage. Though his grandfather was a Modenese, and though, broken in health from his arduous work for the public, Goldoni had just passed several weeks in Modena with his entire family, that ungrateful town forswore him to honour a vagrant in a stolen coat, for surely those lines written by the Abate Vicini, court poet of Modena, fit Goldoni alone:

> New ground to cultured Europe you exposed,
> A comic world, Chiari, you disclosed.[8]

[8] In *Della vera poesia teatrale*, etc. Vicini, it will be recalled, was probably the Abate J.-B.-V., whose chastisement caused Goldoni to wish

The Brescian was praised in Modena, moreover, for "banishing troublesome truth from the stage." Hailed as a former citizen, he was given an ovation in the Rangoni theatre, the title of court poet being bestowed upon him by the reigning duke two years before Goldoni was similarly honoured by the ruler of Parma.

"Such indifference to Goldoni's comedies in so short a time," exclaims a Modenese contemporary,[9] "when it seemed that the entire world had become a band of fanatics in that great man's cause!" This writer, moreover, thus thrusts him aside as a man who had served his purpose:

> Certainly, no one will ever be able to take from Goldoni the boast and the merit of having been the first to promote in our day so great a good with such a will; but he has truly been too much in haste. Desiring to give so many comedies each year is going too far, and the wish to do too much has misled him. He has chosen in some of his comedies characters that are not proper either on the stage or in society; therefore, to present them, a particular kind of audience is necessary if modesty is not to be offended.

Although lovers of fustian were unable to see that the elegance they admired in Chiari was mere stiltedness, and the impropriety they condemned in Goldoni the very naturalism that makes him live, Goldoni

to become a monk. While Goldoni was ill at Modena, Vicini assisted him affectionately, but together with other Modenese poets and critics took Chiari's side, when this dramatist was patriotically glorified. Nevertheless, Goldoni bore Vicini no ill will, and dedicated *La Villeggiatura* to him.

[9] Abate Francesco Fanti in a letter of Aug. 8, 1754, published in *Modena a Carlo Goldoni.*

himself understood Chiari's weakness. In *The Discontented* (*I Malcontenti*), a comedy he wrote while this rivalry still flourished, he cleverly satirized the Brescian in these words, spoken by Grisologo, one of its characters:

> My style, which shall make me world-famous, consists in the ability to say things in a vibrating, high-falutin, sonorous way, full of metaphors and similes, by which means I rise now to the starry skies, now skim the low-lying earth. . . . I bind the tragic and the comic together, and whenever I write in verse, I abandon myself wholly to poetic passion, without heeding nature, which is wont to be obeyed by others with excessive scruple. . . . I apply all my industry to the easy flow of metre, to the vibration of rhyme, and you shall see with what workmanship I have woven together the first verses in order to heighten the effect of the second.

But Goldoni was not left to fight his battles alone; he, too, had ardent partisans, whom he is at pains to name in his memoirs, even while silent regarding his traducers. During his sojourn at Parma, his enemies at home, it will be remembered, published the news of his death, but when he returned safe and sound to Venice, bearing a ducal appointment and possessing a pension, which "excited the envy and anger of his foes," there were men of letters who, as he says, "had some consideration for him" and undertook his defence. "Thus a war was declared," he exclaims, "in which I became quite innocently the victim of angry minds."

The friends Goldoni names as his defenders are the Jesuit father Giambatista Roberti, a Bassanese poet and philosopher; the Abate Sciugliaga, a Dalma-

tian, who not only defended him with his pen, but who, years later, loaned him money as well; Count Pietro Verri, a Milanese soldier, administrator, and man of letters, who with his brother and some literary intimates founded a coffee-house club in Milan with a journal *Il Caffè,* modelled upon Addison's *Spectator,* as its mouthpiece; Nicolò Beregan, a patrician poet, and Count Gasparo Gozzi, brother of the man with whom he was soon to become embroiled in a warfare of greater moment than that with Chiari. Roberti and Beregan lauded Goldoni in stilted verse, while Verri had the acumen to say in discriminating prose that:

> Goldoni's comedies rest in the first place on a basis of true virtue, humanity, kindness, and love of duty which warms our hearts with the pure flame that spreads wherever it finds fuel, and distinguishes any one who calls himself a man of honour from a vagabond.

Though friends rallied to his defence, and their pamphlets and verses flooded Venice, Goldoni's name would remain as unknown to-day as that of his paltry rival, had not the victory been won by his own genius. Chiari returned in triumph from Modena only to lose the fight, for the dramatist who in the end pleased the Venetians most, pleases posterity as well. During the years that followed, Goldoni put forth his best work, while failure after failure crowned his rival's plagiaristic methods, until, as Goldoni confesses, "poor Medebac was reduced to much fasting," he still being Chiari's manager.[10]

[10] Letter to Arconati-Visconti, Oct. 30, 1756.

But a storm was gathering to deluge both of these warring dramatists, since in Carlo Gozzi they met a foe so redoubtable that they were forced to become allies, his venomous literary shafts being aimed at Goldoni and Chiari alike. Indeed, in all literary history there are few more rancorous attacks than that delivered by Gozzi against these erstwhile enemies.

This singular man, born in Venice in 1720, was a bachelor and a poet, of so morose a nature that he was greeted as the Bear, and known as the Solitary. Having led a roving military life in Dalmatia during his youth, he had returned to Venice, and there, in the midst of lawsuits, had endeavoured unsuccessfully to re-establish the family fortunes. Though he bore the title of count and belonged to an honourable Venetian family, he was not a patrician with the right of voting in the Grand Council. Like Gasparo Gozzi, his weaker but more agreeable brother, whom he truly loved even while reproving his faults, he plied his pen assiduously; yet he sneered at that brother for selling his writings. He was, however, no such castle-builder as he is painted by Paul de Musset and Vernon Lee. On the contrary, to quote John Addington Symonds:[11]

> He was no dramatic dreamer and abstract visionary, but a keen, hardheaded man of business, caustic in speech and stubborn in act, adhering tenaciously to his opinions and his rights, acidly and sardonically humorous, eccentric, but fully aware of his eccentricities, and apt to use them as the material of burlesque humour.

[11] Op. cit.

It may be added that he was an implacable enemy. His dramatic pieces, satirical poems, and prose compositions were mainly polemical; while two malignant controversies have made his name survive his writings. The first of these was the bitter war he waged against Goldoni and Chiari; the other a three-cornered quarrel with Pier Antonio Gratarol over an actress, which was complicated by a breach of lover's faith on Gratarol's part against Caterina Dolfin Tron, an influential though venomous patrician woman. With this latter quarrel the present work is not concerned; it was, however, the direct cause for the writing of Gozzi's memoirs, and shows his partiality for actresses, whom it was his wont to advise, direct, abuse, and teach, "while they danced in rings around his leanness, encircling his silence with whispers and his melancholy with peals of laughter." [12]

Carlo Gozzi delighted in quarrels, bile being the very substance of his nature. Being incurably melancholic, when not warring with some enemy he sought lonely places for his halting steps, and in vain tried to be cheerful by tickling himself in order that he might laugh. At the age of seventy-seven he published his autobiography, to which he gave the singular title: *Useless Memoirs of the Life of Carlo Gozzi, Written by Himself and Published from Motives of Humility* (*Memorie inutili della vita di Carlo Gozzi scritte da lui medesimo e pubblicate per*

[12] Philippe Monnier: op. cit.

umiltà). The object he had in mind in writing these memoirs was to vindicate himself from the slurs Gratarol had cast upon his character at the time of their quarrel, but he tells as well the story of his dispute with Goldoni and Chiari; and since he enjoyed rare facilities for the study of Venetian life, the scope of his *Useless Memoirs* is far wider than the mere detailing of personal and literary squabbles. Their pages teem with descriptions of their author's private life, and of his dealings with lawyers, brokers, Jews, and all sorts of odd persons, while the more varied pictures they present of literary, social, and stage life make them a richer document for the study of Venetian customs in the eighteenth century than Goldoni's more restricted memoirs. Moreover, Gozzi reveals his character in all its aspects, the particulars of his love-affairs being frankly told, yet without the abnormality in this respect displayed by Casanova.

Such, in brief, was the character of the man with whom Goldoni, after triumphing over Chiari, was forced to cross swords for the sovereignty of the Venetian stage. The war between these two writers so opposite in character, was incited by their antipodal convictions, Gozzi being an unyielding conservative in both politics and thought, and therefore opposed by nature to Goldoni, the reformer, who was seeking to dethrone the national Improvised Comedy with plays constructed according to foreign principles.

A considerable number of Venetians had already been carried away with the deism of Voltaire and

the Encyclopædists, while French fashions were distinctly the vogue. Indeed, there were men like Angelo Querini bold enough to preach political reform in the very shadow of the terrifying Inquisition of State. In the drawing-rooms, coffee-houses, and *casini,* French literature was discussed and French fashions were aped; for in Venice, as elsewhere in Europe, the foundations of the old order of things were beginning to crumble under the weight of revolutionary sentiment, French philosophy having inspired even in the hearts of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat the hope that a new era was dawning. Meanwhile, conservatives clung to their preconceptions, the word prejudice being used freely by the radicals in condemnation of every restraining influence in politics and morals, even the society of decrepit Venice being in the state of unrest that prevailed throughout Europe, but more particularly in France. Together with the old order of things, the Improvised Comedy had become infirm, and together with the inroad of French ideas and isms, a comedy hitherto unknown to the Italians came into being under the adept hand of Goldoni. Moreover, he had satirized the nobles on the stage. So long as he confined his reforms to the writing of a style of comedy that heretofore had been extemporized, the conservatives saw in him no great menace to the national stage, but when, as in the case of *Pamela* and *The Scotch Girl* he entered the lachrymose field of La Chaussée and garnered foreign plots as well, he became in their

eyes a radical innovator, and when Chiari followed suit, he too inspired conservative hate.

This Toryism found expression in a conservative academy, organized in 1747, under the ribald name of *Accademia Granellesca,* of which Carlo Gozzi was the inspiring genius. A witless little priest with a tiny voice, named Giuseppe Secchellari, was chosen as *Arcigranellone*,[13] or arch-big-simpleton, of this academy, and with mock reverence its members placed a garland of plums upon his brow, he being enthroned on a huge chair, which he fondly believed to be the seat of the renowned Cardinal Bembo of classic memory, while he was derided in mock odes and flummery which he thought were panegyrics. In the heat of summer, whilst the academicians sipped cooling drinks, hot tea was given him as a mark of superiority; and in winter, whilst they drank coffee, he was served ice water, the miserable arch-simpleton being forced to sweat or shiver according to the season. When they tired of frolicking at his expense, the academicians left him to drivel in the chair of Bembo, while they discussed serious matters, the objects of the academy being to promote the study of the best Italian authors, the simplicity and harmony of refined style, and above all the purity of the Italian language. In the pursuance of these worthy purposes the Granelleschi fell foul of Goldoni, who far from being a purist was considered by them a radical, guilty of undermining the Italian drama.

[13] *Granello* is a synonym of *cogliono* and both have the secondary meaning of simpleton.

Besides Carlo Gozzi and his brother, Gasparo, this academy counted among its members Giuseppe Baretti the critic, Forcellini the littérateur, Lastenio the polygraph, and many a lesser light, as well as a sprinkling of dilettante patricians; but of all these only Carlo Gozzi and Baretti attacked Goldoni viciously. Indeed, Gasparo Gozzi was so well disposed toward him that he not only criticized his work favourably in the columns of the *Gazzetta Veneta,* but also saw the Pasquali edition of his plays through the press, after Goldoni had departed for France.

Carlo Gozzi, however, was an implacable host in himself, to whose sour, conservative mind the Improvised Comedy was "the particular distinction of the Italian nation." To this purist Goldoni appeared to possess "poverty and meanness of intrigue," and as a writer of Italian he seemed "not unworthy to be placed among the dullest, basest, and least accurate authors who have used our idiom." Chiari he considered "the most turgid, the most inflated writer of the century," and though he acknowledged "the infinite superiority of Goldoni as a comic playwright," he looked upon the "mania" created by these dramatists as "a fungus growth upon opinion, at best worthy of laughter."

In the year 1756 [14] while the rumour of Goldoni's death was being spread abroad by his Venetian enemies, Carlo Gozzi wrote a sort of comic almanac

[14] In his *Memorie inutili* Gozzi gives the date as 1757, but the first edition of the *Tartana,* issued in Paris at the expense of Daniele Farsetti, the patrician to whom it was dedicated, bears the date 1756.

in verse, entitled *The Tartan of Influxes for Leap Year 1756* (*La Tartana degl' influssi per l'anno bisestile 1756*), in which he set forth in octaves the various impending woes of Venice, written, as he avers, "in strictly literary Tuscan,—in a style inspired by that of the ancient Tuscan authors."

Modelled on an annual almanac for country-folk issued at Treviso, *The Tartan* was supposed to bear to Venice its monthly influx of troubles. February dealt with comedies, November with Martellian verses, and for December the speedy return from Portugal of Antonio Sacchi, the harlequin, and his comrades was invoked—a desire soon fulfilled owing to the great earthquake at Lisbon. In a sonnet that ended *The Tartan,* Goldoni and Chiari were mentioned by name, the author declaring himself the inexorable enemy of their new-fangled plays and the intrepid friend of the Improvised Comedy. Goaded by this attack, Goldoni so far departed from his usual discretion as to reply in some occasional verses written to welcome a friend upon his return from a rectorship in the provinces, wherein, to quote Gozzi's aspersion, "he vented this commonplace rigmarole":

In print I've seen a Tartan drag
  A load of verses, sour and dull
Enough to terrify a hag;
  With plagiarism sauced and full
Of acrid salt and arrogance.
  In one whose luck is on the wane,
Such license to forgive, perchance,
  Is just, when fickle fortune fain

Would turn on him. Yet he who speaks
With evil argument and fails
In boastful words, with pride atune,
To prove the insolence he rails,
Acts like a dog who bays the moon.

Upon the appearance of this justifiable answer to *The Tartan,* a battle of pamphlets, sonnets, and squibs ensued in which Gozzi, "whose heart," as Signor Caprin says,[15] "was partly quixotic and partly ruffian," descended to obscenity and ribald personalities, whereupon Goldoni pungently and, it may be added, truthfully dubbed him:

A Lombard acting in a Cruscan's part,
Smiles on his lip, and venom in his heart.[16]

The part Gozzi is here accused of assuming, is that of a member of the *Accademia della Crusca,* which in Florence during the sixteenth century attacked Tasso for the impurity of his Italian. *Crusca* means bran or chaff, and the symbol of this academy was a sieve, in which the chaff remained after the good flour, or worthy literary products, had passed through. Answering meekly the accusation made by Gozzi and the Granelleschi, that he was neither a poet nor a scholar, Goldoni thus alludes to the sieve through which Tasso's writings had been maliciously sifted:

I know too well I'm not an able scribe
And that from worthy founts I ne'er imbibe:

[15] Op. cit.

[16] In *La Tavola rotonda,* verses written on the occasion of the wedding of Pietro Contarini and Maria Venier. In *Delli Componimenti diversi,* Pasquali ed., Vol. II.

As reason and my style dictate, I write;
And pleasure, by good luck, I oft incite.
Alas, if critics through the Tuscan sieve
Should strain my humble works, they could not live.

To this Gozzi replied with a sonnet, in which he stated that he was preparing "a commentary that would prove both the assumption and the argument," and soon he circulated throughout Venice a satirical composition entitled *The Comic Theatre at the Pilgrim's Inn, handled by the Granelleschian Academicians* (*Il Teatro comico all' Osteria del Pellegrino tra le mani degli accademici granelleschi*). Conceived in an Aristophanic vein, this satire represents the Granelleschi dining during the carnival at the Pilgrim's Inn in the Piazza San Marco, where their pleasures are interrupted by the entrance of a monstrous creature wearing a mask of four strongly marked and dissimilar faces, "each typical of a style of comedy written by Goldoni"—his earlier harlequinades inspired by the Improvised Comedy, his lachrymose comedies in the style of La Chaussée, his oriental melodramas, and his Venetian naturalistic comedies. In the monster's belly there is a fifth mouth, which utters Goldoni's views, as Gozzi meanly interprets them, and in the dialogue that ensucs, this choleric foe endeavours to prove that Goldoni "had striven to gain popularity rather by changing the aspect of his wares than by any merit they really possessed." He argued unjustly that although Goldoni displayed talent in composing Venetian dialogue, he

nevertheless incited vice "while praising virtue with the dulness of a tiresome sermon," his plays being "a hundred times more lascivious, more indecent, and more injurious to morals" than the time-honoured mask comedies they sought to supplant. The outcome Gozzi thus describes:

> The monstrous mask defended itself but poorly, and at last fell to abusing me personally with all its four mouths at once. This did not serve it; and when I had argued it down and exposed it to the contempt of the Granelleschi, it lifted up its clothes in front and exhibited a fifth mouth, which it carried in the middle of its stomach. This fifth allegorical mouth raised up its voice and wept, declaring itself beaten, and begging for mercy.[17]

The proof of Gozzi's bias lies in the charge of obscenity and immorality which he brings against wholesome Goldoni, perhaps the most moral dramatist of all time. Gozzi's cause was "the purity of literature," yet when he began to write for the stage himself, he displayed more obscenity in his first play than is to be found in all his rival's comedies; while in the pasquinades he directed against his foe, he descends to a baseness and indecency wholly foreign to Goldoni's finer nature. *The Comic Theatre at the Pilgrim's Inn* was deemed so ribald that its author was urged to withdraw it from circulation, a request in which he acquiesced reluctantly, while continuing to bombard both Goldoni and Chiari with shorter diatribes. Chiari challenged Gozzi and the Granelleschi to produce a play. Hunger drove Goldoni

[17] *Memorie inutili*, translated by J. A. Symonds.

and Chiari to the writing of comedies, Gozzi retorted, and since the Granelleschi were not hungry, it was not necessary for them to become playwrights; whereupon Chiari, making common cause with Goldoni, addressed him as "most worthy bard of comedy and poet-friend," a compliment Goldoni repaid in kind, though not without a tinge of irony, in these verses:

You are the eagle proud,
The ant am I:
E'en to the highest cloud
With ease you fly;
My muse ill bears the strain,
The cardinal points to gain.

Chiari, whose star was waning, was eager to league himself with Goldoni; and in the *Gazzetta Veneta,* of which he had become the editor,[18] he averred that he and his rival "might be seen walking together in the public piazza and sitting in the most frequented coffee-houses." Although Goldoni and he had "apparently been foes," he contended that "even in the councils of Apollo politics were known"; hence, "what appeared to be opposition and enmity was merely laudable rivalry," planned by Goldoni and himself for the purpose of getting "more followers for their respective flags, more money in their theatres, and more applause from the world." "Who will deny," he continues, "that their enmity was a fine piece of politics?"

This subtle explanation of a quarrel that had lasted

[18] Achille Neri in the *Ateneo veneto,* Jan.-Feb., 1907.

ten years coincides with Symonds's suggestion that "the alliance these dramatists had struck took off considerably from their vogue." In the dramatic race, however, Chiari had been distanced; therefore, by becoming the victor's ally, he was able to advertise himself again; for in spite of Gozzi's attacks, the playgoers still flocked to see Goldoni's comedies. Moreover, the latter's fame had spread not only throughout Italy, but abroad as well, Voltaire having already enlisted in his cause. A finer and a fairer critic than Gozzi, this great Frenchman had divined Goldoni's naturalistic genius, for while the Venetian war of diatribes was at its height, he had indited these verses in a letter to the Marquis Albergati-Capacelli (June 19, 1760), which this admirer of Goldoni permitted to be published in the *Gazzetta Veneta:*

On baiting noted men of parts
They plume themselves in cultured lands.
Goldoni sees abusive darts
Aimed at his friends by critics' hands.

They know not by what gauge to test
The value of his works; in fact
In this procedure they request
Dame Nature as the judge to act.

Thus Nature ably judged the cause
'Twixt critics who could not agree:
Though every author has his flaws,
This man Goldoni pictured me."

When Goldoni thus became an international figure, Gozzi whetted his knife anew. It behoved him to

act with more aggressiveness; therefore, he boldly planned to attack his enemy upon his own ground,—the stage. "The dropping fire that had been exchanged between their partisans," says Gozzi, "kept the names and fames of Goldoni and Chiari before the public." As both "professed themselves champions of theatrical reform," and as their aim, as he states it, was to "cut the throat of the innocent *Commedia dell' arte,*" Gozzi felt that he "could not castigate the arrogance of these self-styled Menanders better than by taking his old friends Truffaldino, Tartaglia, Brighella, Pantalone, and Smeraldina under his protection."

The headquarters of the Granelleschi were in the bookshop of Paolo Colombani, where every month they issued under the title of *Atti granelleschi* a series of critical and satirical papers, which "drew crowds of purchasers round Colombani's counter." There Gozzi opened fire, so he says, "with a dithyrambic poem, praising the extempore comedians, and comparing their gay farces favourably with the dull and heavy pieces of the reformers." One day, according to Baretti,[19] Goldoni and Gozzi "met in a bookshop," which probably was Colombani's, "the occasion being propitious for the venting of satirical bile." Both Baretti and Gozzi accuse Goldoni of boastful arrogance during the verbal affray that ensued; yet, both being his enemies, it seems likely that their evidence is considerably col-

[19] *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy.*

oured by their spleen.[20] "Goldoni called me a verbose word-monger," Gozzi avers, "and kept asserting that the enormous crowds that flocked to the enjoyment of his plays constituted a convincing proof of their essential merit, it being one thing to compose verbal criticisms, and quite another to write plays which will fill theatres with enthusiastic audiences." "Vexed by this appeal to popular judgment," says Gozzi, "I uttered the deliberate opinion that crowded theatres proved nothing with regard to the goodness or badness of the plays which people came to see; and I further staked my reputation on drawing more folk together than he could do with all his scenic tricks, by simply putting the old wives' fairy-story of the *Love of the Three Oranges* upon the boards." [21]

Undaunted by the incredulous laughter that greeted his quixotic challenge, Gozzi, "to vindicate the honour of the Granelleschi," wrote a fantastic piece around the old wives' tale in question, which with his vaunted disregard for royalties, he presented to Sacchi who, since his return from Portugal, had been giving mask comedies in Venice with ill success. This actor produced it during the Carnival of 1761, at the San Samuele theatre, where it created, according to its author, "such a sudden and noisy revolution of taste, that Chiari and Goldoni saw in it the sentence of their doom."

[20] Baretti being in England at the time, writes from hearsay knowledge, while Gozzi's account was penned years after the event.

[21] *Memorie inutili*, translated by J. A. Symonds, whose admirable English renderings of Gozzi have been used throughout this chapter.

GOLDONI IN COLOMBANI'S BOOK SHOP

Collection of Professor Italico Brass

The Love of the Three Oranges (*L'Amore delle tre melarancie*), as Gozzi styled his play, was a Neapolitan fairy tale, translated to the stage in the manner made familiar to English audiences by Christmas pantomimes, except that the masks, instead of appearing in a mute harlequinade after the story has been told, are characters in the play itself, Pantalone being a king's adviser; Brighella, or the modern clown, a prince's servant; Truffaldino, or Harlequin, a jester; and Smeraldina, or Columbine, an intriguing Moorish maid. Another of the characters of the Improvised Comedy, Tartaglia, the stammerer, is a melancholy prince whose father, Silvio, King of Diamonds, rules an imaginary realm, his minister being Lelio, the Knave of Diamonds, a villain who plots Prince Tartaglia's death in order that he may marry Princess Clarice, the king's niece, and inherit the throne.

The people of Venice who, on a carnival night were attracted to the San Samuele theatre by the strange announcement that a familiar nursery tale was to be staged, were taken, as Philippe Monnier says,[22] "to the land where everything happens, where the Blue Bird nests." When the curtain rose, the King of Diamonds, dressed as they had seen him on their playing-cards, was discovered in consultation with time-honoured Pantalone about a mysterious malady that prevented Prince Tartaglia from laughing and was slowly encompassing his death. The prince had

[22] Op. cit.

been poisoned, said Pantalone, by Lelio's agent, Fata Morgana, the sorceress, with charms in Martellian verse,—a hit at Chiari and Goldoni, whose Martellian verses "bored every one to death," Gozzi said, "by their monotonous rhyme." As an antidote to the morbid influences of Martellian verse, Fata Morgana's enemy, the wizard Celio, sends to King Silvio's court the jester, Truffaldino, the mere sight of whom was sure to provoke laughter. Fata Morgana, the sorceress, and Celio, the wizard, were caricatures of Chiari and Goldoni respectively, and their hostility symbolizes the warfare that had waged for so many years between the two dramatists. When Truffaldino tried unsuccessfully to make the prince laugh, to quote Gozzi's own vulgarity in evidence of his malice:

> He smelt the prince's breath, and swore that it stank of a surfeit of undigested Martellian verses. The prince coughed and asked to be allowed to spit. Truffaldino brought him a vessel, examined the expectoration and found it a mass of rancid, rotten rhymes.

All through this extravaganza, or theatrical fable (*fiaba teatrale*), as Gozzi styled his dramatic form, there were coarse thrusts at Goldoni and Chiari; but the audience, even if it cared little for its rancour, delighted in its whimsicalities, its medley of harlequinades, satire, and nursery tales, for side by side with Gozzi's attack upon his enemies a tale of enchantment was unfolded. Melancholy Prince Tartaglia, shod with a pair of magic iron shoes, sets forth

with Truffaldino in search of the three oranges which, as he had heard his grandmother say, were two thousand miles away, in the power of Creonta, a gigantic witch. Tartaglia and Truffaldino are wafted by a mighty wind to her domain; where after a series of strange adventures Truffaldino succeeds in plucking the three oranges, which he had been charged by Celio, the wizard, not to open, except within reach of water. When he cuts the first, a beautiful maiden is born, who withers and dies for lack of a drink, and in his anxiety to slake her thirst, he cuts the second orange and liberates another maiden, who likewise breathes her last.

Just when Truffaldino is on the point of cutting the third orange in the hope that its juice will revive the two maidens who have perished, Prince Tartaglia wrenches it from his grasp, carries it to the shore of a lake, opens it with the point of his sword, and quenches the thirst of the enchanted princess appearing from its rind, with water borne to her rosy lips in one of his magic shoes. He marries her, it is needless to add, after outwitting all his enemies, Truffaldino being charged by Celio, the wizard, "to keep Martellian verses, those inventions of the devil, out of all dishes served at the royal board." Then, to quote the petulant author of this fantasy:

> The play wound up with that marriage festival which all children know by heart—the banquet of preserved radishes, skinned mice, stewed cats, and so forth. And inasmuch as the journalists were wont in those days to blow their trumpets of applause over

every new work which appeared from Signor Goldoni's pen, we concluded with an epilogue, in which the spectators were besought to use all their influence with these journalists, in order that a crumb of eulogy might be bestowed upon our rigmarole of mystical absurdities.

The fight between Gozzi and Goldoni, which culminated in the production of *The Love of the Three Oranges,* was really a preliminary skirmish in the long war that soon waged throughout Europe between classicism and romanticism, for although Gozzi was inspired by a conservative love of the old Improvised Comedy, the fiabesque drama by which he expressed it was superlatively romantic; whereas Goldoni's naturalistic comedies were classic in their simplicity and truth. Though his admiration for linguistic purity was pedantic, Gozzi taxed his inventiveness in order to appear formless, the supernatural being his element, poetry his passion, and pure entertainment his object. Goldoni on the other hand, though in nowise a bookish man, conformed more closely to classicism. Being an observer who loved human nature, he served the truth and sought at the same time to further morality by teaching wholesome lessons, differing thereby mainly in sublimity of subject and loftiness of expression from the dramatists of ancient Greece. Gozzi, however, did not declare himself the purely romantic poet he has been acclaimed to be by romantic enthusiasts in Germany and France, his romanticism being the unconscious outcome of his spleen, as well as of his satirical sense

of humour; since in the avidity with which he pursued Goldoni and Chiari—his Euripides and Agathon—he was, as Symonds has pointed out,[23] "a Venetian Aristophanes whose crusade against the stage of his day was not set on foot to further the cause of romantic beauty, but rather to assuage his own militant sarcasm."

Those who saw for the first time *The Love of the Three Oranges,* found in it a novelty as appealing to their mystic sense as the symbolized moral platitudes of Maeterlinck's *Blue Bird* are to modern audiences; yet Scala's extravaganzas had satisfied in the previous century a similar fondness for elaborate stage effects and fairy mysticism, a proof that nothing under the theatrical sun is really new. The inconstant Venetians, so Baretti testifies, forgot the eagerness with which they had once acclaimed Goldoni and Chiari "in order to mock them while loudly applauding *The Three Oranges";* and nightly the San Samuele theatre was packed to its doors, while Goldoni's former associates, Antonio Sacchi and Cesare D'Arbes, made light of him.

For several years Gozzi continued to delight his countrymen with his whimsicalities, *The Love of the Three Oranges* being followed by nine other theatrical fables from his fanciful pen.[24] Meanwhile, Giu-

[23] Op. cit.

[24] *Il Corvo,* 1761; *Il Re cervo, Turandot, La Donna serpente* (original of Wagner's *Die Feen*), all of 1762; *Zobeide,* 1763; *I Pitocchi fortunati* and *Il Mostro turchino,* of 1764; *L'Angellino belverde,* and *Zeim, re de' genii,* of 1765.

seppe Baretti, the friend of Johnson and Garrick, returned to his native land and established in Venice a short-lived, venomous review, to which he gave the testy name of *Literary Scourge* (*Frusta letteraria*). An apostle of romanticism and the panegyrist of Shakespeare, this "Italian Lessing" divined in the half real, half fantastic theatrical fables of his fellow Granelleschian a certain affinity with Shakespeare's fanciful comedies, such as *The Tempest,* which made their author appear to his biased mind the greatest dramatic poet of Italy. Meanwhile he lashed Goldoni, the naturalist, whom Voltaire, his foe, had exalted: "the most vulgar of Italian writers, seeking to play the philosopher and moralist without having studied either philosophy or morals," "a poisoner of the public," "a parrot who repeats what he does not understand," being part of the opprobrium Baretti applied to the author of *The Boors* and *The Chioggian Brawls.* Goldoni's art was too simple and natural to be understood by the critics of that artificial century. Only a few broad-minded men, such as Voltaire and Cesarotti, a Paduan poet and man of letters, were able to view it justly.

But the pacific man, to whom the long literary warfare he had been forced against his will to wage was a bitter torment, had fled to France before Baretti began to lash him in his *Literary Scourge.*[25] About the time Carlo Gozzi's theatrical fables began to wean

[25] Baretti did not begin publishing *The Scourge* until the autumn of 1762, and in the spring of that year Goldoni had already left Venice.

his countrymen from their love for him, Goldoni was offered a two years' engagement as playwright by *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne,* who since Molière's day had been playing in Paris at the Hôtel de Bourgogne. This invitation, which was transmitted to him officially by the French ambassador in Venice, gave him an opportunity to retreat with honour from the field where his arch-enemy had triumphed. He foresaw that to expatriate himself, even for so short a period as two years, would make it hard for him ever to compete again for the favour of the Venetian public; yet, after delighting his countrymen with fully a hundred comedies during the fourteen arduous years he had served them, he saw them desert *en masse* to his enemy's camp the moment the banner of novelty was unfolded there. As Goldoni himself says, his position was precarious. He tried in vain to secure a legal preferment, and likewise a pension from the Venetian republic, to support him during "the sad days of old age"; all he could obtain was a suspension for "the period of his stay in France" of a ten years' contract he had signed with Vendramin in 1756; whereupon, having received permission of his patron, the Duke of Parma, to leave Italy, he accepted the French engagement, and prepared to set out for Paris.

Soon the rumour spread throughout the coffee-houses and *casini* that "papa Goldoni" was about to leave Venice. When he heard this welcome news, Carlo Gozzi was probably not obliged to tickle him-

self in order to smile; but the valiant man he had vanquished did not retire from the field of his defeat in a spirit of rancour. Loving his inconstant fellow-countrymen too dearly to bear them any ill will, Goldoni wrote as his farewell to them one of those naturalistic plays in the Venetian dialect, that are peculiar to his genius.

Though he called it *One of the Last Evenings of the Carnival* (*Una delle ultime sere di carnovale*), this simple picture of Venetian life belies its name, since, instead of carnival joy, a spirit of sadness pervades it. This dramatic trifle is not a play, but rather an allegory, in which the author symbolizes his departure from the land of his birth. The story is concerned with the fortunes of Anzoletto, a designer of patterns for silk fabrics, who receives the offer of a remunerative engagement abroad, which he reluctantly accepts. With a heavy heart he bids farewell to the weavers for whose looms he has so long designed the patterns; and to the Venetians who attended its first performance the allegory that lies in this simple picture of Venetian life was evident. The weavers symbolized the actors of the San Luca theatre, and the designer of patterns, the dramatist himself, now called to labour in a foreign land. When the actor playing Anzoletto turned to his comrades upon the stage and lisped these lines, tears must have welled in the eyes of many a *zentildonna* who had belittled Goldoni to her circle of friends, and

many a pamphleteer must have blushed for the abuse he had heaped upon his devoted head:

> Forget this country, this my beloved native land? Forget my patrons, my dear friends? This is not the first time that I have gone away, and wherever I have been, I have always carried the name of Venice engraven on my heart. I have always remembered the favours, the kindnesses I have received; I have ever longed to return, and when I have returned, it has always been a consolation. Every comparison I have had occasion to draw has made my country seem more beautiful, more splendid, and more worthy of respect. Each time I returned I discovered new beauties, and so it will be this time, if Heaven permits me to return. I swear upon my honour that I leave with a tortured heart; that no attraction, no good fortune I may meet, will compensate for being far from those who wish me well. Preserve your love for me, dear friends, and may heaven bless you. I say so from the heart.

Touched by the fervour of this farewell speech, friend and foe alike arose as one man on that Shrove Tuesday evening of the year 1762, to shout: "Goodbye, Goldoni! A lucky journey to you! Remember your promise! Don't fail to come back!" The weary dramatist to whom these Venetians, ere they mingled in mask and domino with the carnival throng outside, shouted a fond farewell, burst into tears as he stood listening in the wings to their friendly shouts. "Come back, Goldoni! Don't fail to come back!" cried the laggards, as the crowd filed out of the San Luca theatre; but the disheartened man of fifty-five, who stood alone upon the stage, though he wept while the lean candle-snuffers put out the lights, and fondly prayed that he might return, never saw his

beloved Venice again. *One of the Last Evenings of the Carnival* was the name he had chosen for the touching allegory with which he bade farewell to the city of his love. "Shunless destiny" made it the last he was to enjoy in his native land. But before the story of the thirty years he passed in France is told, an account must be given of the plays he wrote in verse during the fourteen years he served Medebac and the Vendramins; for in some of these he rebuked the rivals and critics whose bitterness had driven him into exile.

XIII

COMEDIES IN VERSE

IF the authorship of two thousand or more plays was not attributed to Lope de Vega, and to Alexandre Hardy that of fully six hundred, Goldoni, in the language of the day, would hold the world's record in dramaturgy. Although his output of two hundred and fifty or more dramatic pieces is dwarfed by the work of these progenitors of the Spanish and French drama, themselves contemporaneous, his fecundity is astonishing, ay, even appalling, to the reader of the present day, accustomed to regard Shakespeare and Molière as prolific dramatists. Indeed his comedies in verse, which form the subject of the present chapter, fairly vie in number with all the plays of the one, and equal those of the other. In this count, moreover, his tragedies, operas, interludes, and merry plays for music, all of which are metrical, are not included, while his occasional verse alone exceeds in quantity the work of many a modern poet.

The object of poetry being to create intellectual pleasure by means of either imagery or passionate language, Goldoni's verse may seldom be called poetry. It is simple and natural, yet so scantily

adorned with imagery that its prosaic nakedness is ill concealed. Passion such as Molière voiced in Alceste, his misanthrope, is foreign to Goldoni's merry soul; therefore it seems futile to regard this genial Venetian in the light of a true poet. Indeed, he is merely a nimble versifier, who wrote plays in metrical form whenever theatrical exigencies demanded them, or whenever he felt called upon to imitate French refinement. His occasional verse, moreover, was written to repay obligations, rather than to express the feelings of a heart overflowing with sentiment. Like the verse of his comedies it was penned, as if to order, whenever there was a marriage in the family of some friend or patron, or whenever the daughter of such a family took the veil.

Although the stanzas of these occasional verses teem with trite praise of benefactors, Goldoni's naturalism now and then appears;—in *The Gondola* (*La Gondola*), for instance, a humorous dialogue between a Florentine coachman and a Venetian gondolier concerning the marriage of one of Goldoni's patrons, and in *The Padua Packet* (*Il Burchiello di Padova*) written in honour of the wedding of another. In the latter the author, taking passage on a boat that plies upon the placid Brenta, describes his fellow-voyagers so truly and converses with them so ingenuously, that the reader feels himself to be aboard that Padua packet, pulled by the swarthy oarsmen of the *remurchio,* or towboat, along "the tranquil and serene lagoon." Yet the reader must

turn many a commonplace page of this occasional verse before his weary attention is rested by such delights as this; turn, too, many pages of affected verse delivered before the Arcadian academies of Rome, Pisa, and Bologna. Here Goldoni joined "Arcadia itself, its legion of poets, its bevies of shepherdesses, —semi-nymphs, semi-nuns—its naiads, fauns, and pythian priestesses," and with them "faded into the inane from which like a vapour they had emerged." [1] In justice it must be said that apparently he did not take these occasional poems seriously. In the preface to the volume in which they appear, he says that they are merely "pleasantries in verse, improperly termed poems; for Divine Poetry should be treated differently, and I love and venerate her too much to misuse her name and charming attributes." This may be only becoming modesty; yet his own estimates of his plays are so frankly made in the pages of his memoirs, that it seems unfair to suspect him of a sneaking regard for efforts one is glad to join him in dismissing as "merely pleasantries in verse."

His comedies in verse may be taken more seriously, for here he stands upon more solid ground. True, he never rises to poetic heights, even in these plays; yet unadorned as his dramatic verses are with imagery and passion, they are neatly turned at times and frequently disclose the naturalistic qualities on which his fame most surely rests. Like his comedies in prose, they were written at fever-heat, therefore their

[1] William Roscoe Thayer: op. cit.

lines are often slovenly and in the main are little more than rhymed prose; nevertheless a few of his comedies in verse, notably those penned in the Venetian dialect, vie in spontaneity and truth to nature with his best prose comedies. As in the case of his dramatic work in prose, he is at his highest when painting the life of Venice, and at his lowest when trying to imitate Molière, or the French refinement of his own day. His comedies in verse fall naturally, too, into the categories into which the prose comedies have been divided in the present work—Exotic Comedies, Comedies of the Aristocracy, Comedies of the Bourgeoisie, and Comedies in the Venetian Dialect.

Three of the comedies in verse, however, stand apart from any of the prose comedies in that they treat of the lives of classic poets. Called respectively *Molière* (*Il Moliere*), *Terence* (*Il Terenzio*), and *Torquato Tasso* (*Il Torquato Tasso*), these three comedies, by far the most ambitious of all Goldoni penned, show more conclusively than any, that, however fluent as a versifier, he was not a poet in the true sense. Having chosen such exalted subjects he should have soared to the empyrean; yet though he laboured painfully to rise, the very weight of his task kept him hovering near the prosy earth he had not the ability to leave entirely.

Though in subject chronologically the last, *Molière* was the first of these biographical comedies to be penned. Being considered fully in a later chapter, the plot and poetical attributes of this play

about the foremost of French dramatists may be disregarded here. A word, however, concerning its metrical form is not amiss, particularly as the Martellian measure adopted by Goldoni on this occasion was subsequently used by him many times, it being the Italian form most closely resembling the Alexandrine measure of the French classical comedy he sought to emulate.

This measure takes its name from Pier Iacopo Martelli, an Italian poet who at the time of Goldoni's birth occupied the chair of belles-lettres at the university of Bologna. A glib writer in several forms of literature, he came under French influence so completely during a visit to Paris in 1713, that he was reproached with Gallicism by his fellow-countrymen for introducing into his tragedies the measure that now bears his name. The Martellian metre, however, though it resembles the Alexandrine in its harmonious rhythm, has one more foot than its French prototype. As it consists of fourteen syllables, it suggests the English ballad measure, though the metrical value of the syllable is so different in the two languages that the resemblance is numerical rather than quantitative.

Although Martelli defended himself against the charge of Gallicism by maintaining that the measure he had adopted was the invention of Ciullo d'Alcamo, a Sicilian poet of the thirteenth century, he was nevertheless belittled by his contemporaries, who refused to accept the new measure as an Italian form.

Twenty-four years after Martelli's death,[2] Goldoni, in casting about for a form in which to express the sorrowful love-story of the French Master, chose the Martellian metre as best suggesting French atmosphere. "The Martellian verse had been forgotten," he says. "The monotony of the cæsura, and of the too frequent and always coupled rhymes had already disgusted Italian ears, even during the author's lifetime; hence every one was prejudiced against me, for presuming to revivify verses that had already been proscribed. But the effect overcame the prejudice. My verses gave as much pleasure as the play, and *Molière* was placed by public opinion beside *Pamela*."

If this be true, the public was as much in error as Goldoni, both *Molière* and *Pamela* being plays in which our Venetian's genius is little manifest. Rather does one agree with the late Giosuè Carducci, Italy's foremost modern poet, in his following estimates both of the Martellian measure and of Goldoni's prosaic use of it:

> With a style at once colourful, strong, and passionate, such as Martelli's is occasionally, the Alexandrine succeeds admirably; when it serves a slovenly, careless style, it becomes valueless and insufferable; therefore it acquired a bad name among us, particularly on account of the wretched versification and language of certain comedies by Goldoni and Chiari.[3]

[2] Goldoni says in his memoirs that "he amused himself in making these verses succeed *fifty* years after their author's death, but Martelli died in 1727, whereas *Molière* was written in 1751.

[3] *Note alle nuove poesie di Giosuè Carducci*, as quoted by P. G. Molmenti in *Carlo Goldoni*.

"Wretched" is perhaps too strong a term to describe Goldoni's Martellian verse; yet it would be equally wrong to use a word of superlative approbation, mediocre being the just adjective with which to qualify it. Luckily, three-fourths of his comedies are in prose. Moreover, though he wrote occasionally in verse to satisfy the taste of his more cultivated auditors, he apparently realized that prose is the natural medium of comedy; since in *The Comic Theatre,* he thus pricks a false bubble of tradition:

> Comedy should be entirely probable, and for the characters to talk in verse is contrary to probability. You will say that comic verses are disguised so as to make them resemble prose. Then why not write simply in prose?

Although he held this sane belief, classic tradition often forced him to the use of verse, particularly in the trio of ambitious comedies—*Molière, Terence,* and *Tasso.* Indeed a modern continental author writing comedies upon similar subjects would probably resort to verse, so thoroughly rooted is the classical tradition. Alas, in only too many instances verse merely stultifies a play otherwise worthy. In the case of Goldoni's comedies this is peculiarly true, his naturalistic genius strutting awkwardly in poetical attire. In *Terence,* for instance, the second comedy of the classical trio, there is scarcely a ray of poetical sunlight to illumine the laboured verses of its five prosaic acts; even in dramatic construction it is inferior to both *Molière* and *Tasso,* there being

less unity of action, less truth to nature than in either of these comedies.

Though the idol of the public, the Terence of Goldoni's play is still the slave of Lucanus, a Roman senator. He loves Creusa, a Greek slave girl, who returns his affection ardently, and he is loved by Livia, the adopted daughter of his master, a haughty Roman maid who conceals her passion because of the chains Terence wears, yet plots to circumvent her Greek rival. Indeed, there is considerable plotting and counter-plotting on the part not only of jealous Livia, but of a slave named Damon, as well, envious of his fellow-bondsman's success. Damon is aided by Lisca, a parasite who seeks to balk the worthy purpose Lucanus has of manumitting Terence as a reward for the fine comedies with which he has adorned the Roman stage. As in both *Molière* and *Tasso,* Goldoni unburdened his artistic heart in this play, particularly in the scene in which parasitic Lisca tells jealous Damon that if he will roast him a brace of pheasants he will teach him how to write a comedy that will undo Terence in the public's favour. Plautus is to be the subject, and the parallel to the discredit of Terence which the latter's enemies will draw is to be both Damon's vindication and his glory. "That is all very well," Damon replies, "and the pheasants are yours, Lisca; yet should I be asked who Plautus was, I know not whether he was a man or some strange beast." Lisca's following answer is manifestly the expression of Goldoni's feelings

regarding both his own art and its critics, and therefore autobiographical:

> I'll give thee light enough on that. Plautus
> Was born in Umbria, and there had failed
> In merchantry. Miserably he pined
> For months, until his lot became so hard
> That he was forced to grind a mill. The wretch
> Conceived his comedies, they say, in hours
> Of rest and tears; when they had reached a score,
> They wrought such marvels, that good fortune smiled
> On him. So pure a style had he, that even
> The Muses, would they speak, must utter words
> Like his. All wise men do him justice, now;
> His simple themes are praised, the art, besides,
> With which he paints men's ways; for, knowing well
> The world, his insight was derived from it.
> His life, scant subject for a comedy
> Doth yield; yet if we romance 't will succeed,
> 'T will answer if our parallel doth leave
> Critical judgment in suspense; then will
> The crowd applaud. But three or four suffice
> To slur this slave and leave the public shouting,
> "O bravo, Damon, bravo!"

To bring the story of this dull play to an end it is sufficient to say that the illustrious Terence gains his freedom, and by an expedient not unlike the tricks of Plautus's Phormion—Scapin's prototype—he gains as well the hand of the Greek girl whom he loves. When. all is said, "Terence," to quote Professor Ortolani,[4] "would not be worthy of remembrance had it not inaugurated at Venice a series of Greco-Latin comedies brief in fortune, yet contemptible." During this period of false art, Socrates, Democritus,

[4] Op. cit.

Diogenes, Æsop, and Plautus were brought to painful resurrection by dramatic dabblers, among whom Chiari alone is remembered because Carlo Gozzi coupled his name with Goldoni's.

Tasso, the third comedy of the classical trio, was also brought to light during this neo-classical orgy *Terence* had ushered in; yet in *Tasso* there is a biographical interest at least, it being primarily a polemic launched, as Goldoni thus says, against the pedants who had taken him to task for the impurity of his Italian:

> I was a Venetian; moreover I had the ill luck of having imbibed with my mother's milk the habit of a very agreeable, very seductive patois, which, alas, was not Tuscan. I learned by rule and I cultivated by reading, the language of good Italian authors, but first impressions reappear in spite of one's intention to avoid them. I had taken a journey to Tuscany, where I had remained four years familiarizing myself with the language; and to purge them of linguistical defects, my plays had been first published in Florence under the eyes and the censorship of the learned men of that country; yet all my precautions had not sufficed in contenting the rigorists. I had always lacked something. I was ever reproached with the original sin of Venetianism.

Tasso had been persecuted throughout his life by the academicians of La Crusca. His *Jerusalem Delivered* had not passed, they maintained, through the sieve symbolizing their society. From Tasso's life Goldoni drew the sources of a play in his own defence. "One should write in good Italian," he declared; "but one should write in a way to be understood in all the sections of Italy. Tasso was wrong in revising his poem to please the academicians of

La Crusca: his *Jerusalem Delivered* is read by every one; no one reads his *Jerusalem Conquered.*"

Thus Goldoni's comedy became a thesis, and his Tasso a spectre of himself fighting his enemies, rather than the great poet whose wrongs at the hands of Duke Alfonso of Ferrara presented so rare an opportunity to picture truly the crafty, cruel, rose-flecked, thorn-strewn life of a renaissance court, with its temples of love and dungeons of misery, its polished *cortegiani* and flattering villains with poison vials or daggers concealed beneath their graceful cloaks. Melancholy Tasso gave him the opportunity of creating an Italian Hamlet—or an Alceste. In his desire to confound his enemies, he has presented only an atrabilious poet in small clothes and a periwig—a Bernardino Perfetti, with too diminutive a head for his majestic laurel crown. The atmosphere is of the eighteenth, not the sixteenth century, the Ferrara of this play being in reality Parma, where Goldoni had basked in the sunshine of a ducal pension. Instead of Maddalò, a villain of the Renaissance who in real life plotted the trusting Tasso's downfall with friendship on his lips, we have prying, gossiping Don Gherardo flitting through this comedy with a quizzing-glass and a snuff-box and minding everybody's business but his own—a villain whose most crafty machination is to steal the manuscript of a poem in which Tasso had sung his unrequited love for Eleonora.

There are three Eleonoras at this court of Ferrara

—or rather Parma: Don Gherardo's wife, the duke's mistress, and a waiting maid, and it is on the identity of the Eleonora of Tasso's passion that the intrigue of the comedy hinges. Throughout five acts, Don Gherardo is tripping in and out trying to discover if the Eleonora of the poem is his wife or another, while each of the three namesakes is endeavouring to make it apparent that she is the poet's inamorata, for the distinction of having it said that her charms have been sung by him.

The love Tasso dares not declare is for the duke's mistress, and when he is not repining, he is complaining of his vapours or ranting against the critics who condemn him. Meanwhile a character called the Cavalier del Fiocco (Knight of the Tuft) taunts him with the impurity of his Italian and makes him long to flee where critics carp not, this fellow being a satire upon the Granelleschi, while the pithy answers of Signor Tomio, a Venetian Philistine, are intended to confound them. Tomio has come to Ferrara to bid Tasso seek an asylum in Venice; there is an amusing Neapolitan, too, who invites him to Naples; and a Roman proffering a laurel crown, which Tasso, after a night in a madhouse (instead of the seven years of reality) accepts, while presaging his own death.

In verses without imagery and with an apocryphal story, this is the sort of Tasso Goldoni has portrayed; yet it must be admitted that this portrayal represents a phase of the true Tasso, the dramatist having dwelt faithfully upon the neurasthenic symptoms that gave

to the poet's melancholy nature the appearance of madness and left him, victim of his own distrust, a prisoner in a bedlam throughout seven distressing years. It is not with the psychology of Goldoni's Tasso that the quarrel lies, nor with the historical liberties taken in condensing into a single day the events of a lifetime, since Shakespeare and Calderon distorted history quite as casually. The quarrel is rather with the atmosphere in which the hypochondriacal poet is placed, the characters surrounding him, the flippancy with which a subject fraught with majesty is handled. Goldoni has dressed his hero in small-clothes. About him, in a stuffy apartment, flit selfish ducal mistresses, vain wives, coquettish soubrettes, and carping pedants, loading the atmosphere with their scents and snuffs. The air should have been the rose-perfumed air of a moonlit balcony, tempered by the music of a lute in a true lover's hand. No prying gossip or cackling poetaster should have been the villain, but a crafty flatterer hiding his venom beneath the folds of his cloak; while Tasso himself should have been no mere neurasthenic, but rather a poet haunted by the bewildering fancies of a weary mind, a genius of "moping melancholy and moon-struck madness."

Moreover, instead of Princess Eleonora D'Este, with her noble qualities of mind, her spiritual beauty, we have a vain and powdered marquise with another cognomen lest her princely rank and name offend a family still regnant. This sop to the stage exigencies

of the day may be pardoned, but not Goldoni's failure to create the atmosphere of the Renaissance and a Tasso worthy to breathe it. Yet the very limitations of this play betray his peculiar genius. He could not rise to the height his subject demanded, nor could he fail in portraying the men and women of his time. His Tasso is a phantom of his own vapours, his Eleonora the vain mistress of a petty duke, his villain a prying courtier, his pedant a caricature of Carlo Gozzi to confound him—all Italians of his day, just as the classic or historical heroes of Calderon were courtly Castilians true to the audience before which they appeared.

Yet Goethe in his *Tasso* committed the same grave error of depicting in the struggles of the Italian poet his own sufferings from princely patronage. To Eckermann he declared that "the court, the situation, the love passages were at Weimar as at Ferrara." Goethe's scenery, a garden adorned with the busts of epic poets, is more suggestive of the Renaissance than Goldoni's; he follows more closely, too, the events of the poet's life, and gives to his characters their real names; yet his *Tasso* is a play of still life so far as action is concerned. Though superior to Goldoni as a poet, in stage-craft Goethe shows inferiority; while in spite of Madame de Staël's declaration that "in *Tasso* he is the Racine of Germany," he depicts with scarcely more sublimity than our Venetian the sufferings of the half-mad poet during the distressing years he passed at Ferrara.

Still more deserving of oblivion than this trio of plays about classical poets are the exotic comedies in verse in which Goldoni plunged blindly into barbaric lands he knew only from the pages of the Italian translation of Thomas Salmon's *Modern History; or, Present State of All Nations;* a work more legendary than accurate, in which this sailor-author recounts the stories told him by the marines. Judging by the fantastic Persia, Morocco, Peru, and Guiana Goldoni presents in *The Persian Bride* (*La Sposa persiana*) and its two sequels as well as in *The Little Dalmatian* (*La Dalmatina*), *The Peruvian Girl* (*La Peruviana*), and *The Fair Savage* (*La Bella selvaggia*), as an authority Salmon was akin to Gulliver.

Since *The Fair Savage* was inspired by l'Abbé Prévost,[5] and *The Peruvian Girl* by Madame de Graffigny,[6] it is perhaps unfair to hold the inexact Salmon entirely responsible for the discovery of the apocryphal lands into which Goldoni blindly led his Venetian admirers, particularly as Zelia, his Peruvian, finds her way to a village in the neighbourhood of Paris.

Yet, whatever may be the truth regarding the origin of the various barbaric ladies of Goldoni's imagination, little need be said about them beyond the fact that they are as romantic as they are unreal. They satisfied a temporary dramatic craze for adventurous plots and fantastic scenery, and the curtain may be quickly drawn upon all of them except *The*

[5] *Histoire générale des voyages.* [6] *Lettres d'une Péruvienne.*

Persian Bride. Here Goldoni appeals to his auditors with oriental magnificence and resorts to the melodramatic claptrap of subterranean passages, daggers, and sudden escapes; yet this play presents an interesting contrast between European and oriental morals, best elucidated by its author's following words:

> The subject of *The Persian Bride* is not heroic: a rich financier of Ispahan, of the name of Machmout, engages and forces Thamas, his son, to marry against his will Fatima, the daughter of Osman, an officer of rank in the Sefavean army. This is what we see every day in our pieces; a young lady betrothed to a young man whose heart is already pre-occupied. . . . But what removed this Asiatic still farther from a level with our ordinary comedies was, that in the house of Machmout, there was a seraglio for himself and another for his son; an arrangement very different from our European custom, where the father and son may have more mistresses than they have in Persia, but no seraglio.
>
> Thamas had in his a Circassian slave named Hircana, to whom he was tenderly attached, and who, notwithstanding her servitude, proudly refused to allow her lover and master to divide his favour with other women, not even with the one his father destined for his spouse.
>
> This is also something new for our climate; for in France, as well as in Italy, a mistress would make no opposition to her friend's forming a respectable and proper connection, provided he continued to see her, or secured her an income by way of consolation in her affliction.

This contrast between the morals of Europe and the East is cleverly expressed in the play itself, when Thamas, the hero, thus voices his envy of the liberties enjoyed by Europeans:

Since no Mohammedan may look upon
A woman not his wife, we do not share
The joys that are to Europeans given.
Italians, Spaniards, Englishmen, and Greeks,
Frenchmen, and Germans, too, may not, forsooth,
Like us have wives a score; yet in the street,
Uncovered by the hundred, they may gaze
At them and amorous looks, at least, bestow
On them at will. Yet Europe numbers still
Amongst her peoples not a few who envy
A sad hareem—as if the slavery
That burdens them were not increased for us.

When *The Persian Bride* was produced the public liked Hircana, the Circassian slave, better than Fatima, the protagonist, a popularity that led to the writing of *Hircana at Julfa* (*Ircana in Julfa*) and *Hircana at Ispahan* (*Ircana in Ispaan*), two plays in which her romantic adventures are continued. Goldoni thought so highly of this Persian trilogy that he devotes two chapters of his memoirs to praise of it; yet silence is to-day the kindest treatment for these oriental plays, foreign both to nature and to Goldoni's genius.

An exotic comedy in verse of quite a different nature is *The English Philosopher* (*Il Filosofo inglese*) a play inspired by the ladies of Venice, who, having made a fad of reading Addison's *Spectator* in a translation then current, believed themselves to be philosophers, or rather *femmes savantes* such as Molière satirized. Although there is a slight similarity in theme between *The English Philosopher* and Mo-

lière's master-piece, in plot there is none whatever, Goldoni's comedy—the scene of which is laid in London, where he had never set foot—being concerned with the secret love of a rich English blue-stocking for a priggish philosopher whose rival is a scion of English nobility. The story of this play is without interest and its principal characters are conventionally dull; yet some of the minor character-bits are drawn in Goldoni's best vein. Particularly is this true of Panich, the cobbler, whose communistic views are not unworthy our modern disciples of discontent. Indeed, the satire in the following scene is too delightful to be passed by, even though the play in which it occurs inadequately represents its author's talent. Here a pot-boy, having seized a pair of Panich the cobbler's shoes as security for a score he has refused to pay, thus appeals to the English philosopher who is passing at the time:

THE POT-BOY (*to the Philosopher*)
His score he will not pay. Justice, good sir!

THE COBBLER (*to the Philosopher*)
'Tis not through malice, sir, I trow. You pay
Too dear refreshment at this inn. A draught
Of boiling water—scarce a farthing's worth—
With sugar, lemon, and some rum. Besides
No cash have I. Ne'er do I carry it.

THE PHILOSOPHER
So, master, so! Worthy Philosopher,
At inns you drink without the cash to pay?

THE COBBLER
And you, good sir, who in philosophy
Are somewhat learned, such an exorbitance

Do you approve? Equal all men are born;
Ours are the goods this world contains. This thing
Is mine, we should not say; nor that is yours.
If man of fellow-man has need, and by
Him is assuaged, to proffer payment is
A shame, I trow. Though penniless, I've drunk
With him. Whene'er his shoes are worn, I'll fit
Him with a pair; then are we quits indeed.

THE POT-BOY (*to the Cobbler*)

Plague take thy shoes! A shilling is my due.
Base cobbler, I will pay thee out!

THE COBBLER

Pay me?

THE PHILOSOPHER (*to the Cobbler*)

Enough's been said. He's right and Right's
A mistress to adore.
(*To the Pot-boy.*) 'Twixt men of worth
All chattels are exchanged, not paid. A pair
Of shoes I need. Friend Panich here will give
Me them for nothing soon.

THE COBBLER

Slowly, my friend.
If I these shoes should give what wilt thou
Give me in exchange?

THE PHILOSOPHER

Nothing: I possess
No trade.

THE COBBLER

But if you have no trade, I have;
And for an idle hand I'll not exchange
Good shoes.

THE PHILOSOPHER

And on a like account, with you,
A fortune for a shilling's worth, this lad
Would not exchange. You know not what you say.

THE COBBLER

I'd have my shoes.

THE POT-BOY

Then pay.

THE COBBLER

Base tyranny!
Wouldst make a fellow pay who has no cash
Or, 'gainst all nature, let him die of thirst!

THE PHILOSOPHER

'Tis true that to assuage your thirst is right.
Yet, if you cannot pay, cold water you
Should drink.

THE COBBLER

You know not what you say. My shoes
I'd have at once, dost understand, my shoes? (*to the Pot-boy*)

THE PHILOSOPHER (*to the Pot-boy*)

Here is the shilling; take it; give the shoes.

THE POT-BOY (*to the Cobbler*)

Here are thy shoes. Thy whistle ne'er again
I'll wet; a fountain seek, or else a well.
(*Exit*)

THE COBBLER (*to the Philosopher*)

I thank thee not; if thou hast paid for me
'Tis but a neighbour's duty to assist his kind.
Unto this act of nature wast thou forced:
To thee I hold myself no way obliged.

Another exotic comedy in verse in which Goldoni leads us to a civilized land instead of to Barbary is *The Dutch Doctor* (*Il Medico olandese*) a play made interesting by its subjectivity, the rational treatment of that intangible malady neurasthenia—or, as it was then called, the vapours—having been its inspiration. Though optimistic by nature and genial

in temperament, Goldoni, like most writers, was nevertheless a chronic sufferer from nerves. At the close of the strenuous theatrical year when he wrote sixteen plays, he "paid the price of his folly," he tells us, "by falling ill." "Subject as I was," he adds, "to the black vapours that attack at the same time both body and mind, I felt them revive within me more violently then ever." In recalling the needed rest he took at Genoa during the following summer he exclaims: "Ah, but it is sweet, above all when one has worked much, to pass a few days *without anything to do!*" A few years later, after the wife of his worthless brother had died, and the peace of his happy Venetian home was destroyed by the advent of that military adventurer and his two children, Goldoni's nerves were unstrung, as many another man's have been, by a deluge of relations. His own words shall describe his neurasthenia on this occasion:

> I was still suffering from the intense fatigue which I had undergone for the theatre of Sant' Angelo; and the verses to which I had unfortunately accustomed the public cost me infinitely more trouble than prose. My spleen began to attack me with more than usual violence. The new family, which I maintained in my house, rendered my health more than ever necessary to me, and the dread of losing it augmented my complaint. My attacks were as much of a physical as of a moral nature. Sometimes my imagination was heated by the effervescence of the bodily fluids, and sometimes the animal economy was deranged by apprehension. Our mind is so intimately connected with our body, that if it were not for reason, which belongs to the immortal soul, we should be mere machines.

A short time after this attack of neurasthenia, Goldoni was attending a performance at Milan, when an actor named Angelini who, like himself, was subject to "the vapours," dropped dead upon the stage. The shock to his nerves was so great that crying aloud, "Angelini, my companion in spleen, is dead," he ran home in terror and there was seized with a "real illness," his mind being as he says, "more difficult to cure than his body." The suggestive treatment administered on this occasion is remarkable in that day of empiricism: "Considering your disease," his doctor told him, "in the light of a child who comes forward to attack you with a drawn sword—if you be on your guard, he cannot hurt you, but if you lay open your breast to him, the child will kill you." "This apologue restored me to health," Goldoni says, "and I have never forgotten it." Being useful "in every stage of life," it proved serviceable in the composition of *The Dutch Doctor,* a comedy inspired while he was sojourning at Colorno with the court of Parma, during the summer of 1756. A few months later he wrote for his ducal patron the libretti of several musical pieces for one of which,[7] Egidio Domualdo Duni, a musician of Neapolitan birth, who shares with Philador, Monsigny, and Grétry the distinction of having created opéra comique, composed the music. A chronic sufferer from nerves, Duni had once been treated effectively at Leyden by the famous Herman Boerhaave, perhaps the great-

[7] *La Buona figliuola,* the plot of which was taken from *Pamela.*

est physician of the day. With nerves as their bond of sympathy, Goldoni and Duni became intimate during the summer they passed at Colorno. Taking frequent walks together, their conversation turned generally on their real or imaginary evils, and during one of these walks *The Dutch Doctor* was inspired in the manner Goldoni here relates:

> M. Duni told me one day that he had been at Leyden in Holland, for the purpose of consulting the celebrated Boerhaave on the symptoms of his malady, . . . the only prescription he gave the hypochondriacal musician being to ride, amuse himself, live in his ordinary manner, and avoid all kinds of medicines. . . . Duni, who had seen him for several months, gave me a detailed description of his manners and way of living, and he mentioned Miss Boerhaave, too, who was young, rich, beautiful, and still unmarried. . . . I listened attentively to him, and formed in my head the seeds of a comedy which soon shot upwards, with the assistance of a little reflection and moral philosophy. I concealed the name of Boerhaave[8] in my piece under that of Bainer, a Dutch physician and philosopher, and introduced a Pole afflicted with the same disease as that of Duni. Bainer treated him in the same manner; but at the end of the play the Pole married the daughter of the physician.

Although the comedy thus inspired, like *A Curious Mishap,* the scene of which is also laid in Holland, tells a trite story of the winning of a rich Dutchman's daughter by a young foreigner, Dr. Bainer, its protagonist becomes truly interesting because of the following advice he gives his hypochondriacal patient, so enlightened for that day of purges and leeches that it is indeed remarkable:

[8] Boerhaave died in 1738, eighteen years before Goldoni's musical play was written.

Listen I pray: By the neighbouring stream
Within the suburbs, choose a shady nook;
In gardens fair seek joyful fellowship,
And with good friends dine at the common board;
Game for amusement, not till ruin comes;
For pleasure, try a good horse, now and then;
Likewise an honest love which you will find
I trow; one nail, the poets say, drives out
Another from the plank. Your remedy
Behold! If you have faith in my advice
No other recompense shall I demand.[9]

To find a more truthful atmosphere in Goldoni's versified comedies of the aristocratic and bourgeois life of Venice, than in those depicting an apocryphal orient, or London and The Hague viewed through the pages of translated books and the stories told by travellers, is a reasonable expectation. Although partially realized, the reader of these comedies is still doomed to considerable disappointment, verse being an unnatural medium for the small talk of society, and Goldoni ill at ease in its use. Indeed the best that may be said for these comedies is that they are better than the exotic comedies in verse, not because they fulfil more exactly the requirements of the poetic drama, but because their atmosphere and characterization are truer to life. A rapid review of the plays in this category will suffice, however, to acquaint the reader with their characteristics.

Though it ends happily, *The Intrepid Woman* (*La*

[9] Goldoni presents a similar exposition of the value of mental treatment in Act II, scene 7, of *Il Ritorno dalla villeggiatura.*

Donna forte), resembles Shakespeare's Othello, Don Fernando being an Iago who poisons the heart of the Marchese di Monte Rosso against his virtuous wife because she has spurned his own amorous attentions. *The Harassed Man of Wealth* (*Il Ricco insidiato*) tells the story of an heir to an uncle's fortune, who, besieged by the blandishments of sycophants, resolves to unmask them by publishing a false will depriving him of his inheritance; though his fair-weather friends desert him, the heroine remains constant and is rewarded by his hand and fortune. The plot of *The Witty Widow* (*La Vedova spiritosa*) is taken from a story by Marmontel; but like *The Upper Servant* (*La Donna di governo*) [10] it is not distinguished by elements either striking or praiseworthy. *The Spirit of Contradiction* (*Lo Spirito di contraddizione*) is another comedy in verse that may be passed by in silence.[11] *The Artful Bride-Elect* (*La Sposa sagace*), however, sheds a side-light upon cicisbeism, for here a young officer is both a girl's betrothed and her step-mother's *cavalier servente*. *The Lone Woman* (*La Donna sola*) contains but a single female part,—that of a clever widow, who, instead of marrying one of her numerous suitors, converts them all into loyal citizens of a Platonic republic ruled by her charms, she being the opposite of the pro-

[10] Goldoni translates the title of this comedy as *La Gouvernante*, used not in the sense of governess, but of a housekeeper or principal servant.

[11] Although Charles Rivière Dufresny had previously written a one-act comedy entitled *L'Esprit de contradiction*, Goldoni denies having seen it before writing his play of the same name.

tagonist of *The Capricious Woman* (*La Donna stravagante*), a heroine so perverse that when she appeared on the stage, Goldoni was forced by his feminine auditors to announce that she was a character of pure invention and not taken from life. A wilful, jealous creature, who persecutes her sister and leads a long suffering lover a merry dance, this wayward lady, Donna Livia by name, seemed to La Bresciani, the capricious actress who played the part, so true a portrait of herself that she did her best to ruin the success of the play. To enliven the plot of *The Father through Love* (*Il Padre per amore*) which he took from Madame de Graffigny's *Cénie,* Goldoni introduced a pair of monstrous noses,[12] yet even these fail to make it a notable play. *The Lover of Himself* (*L'Amante di sè medesimo*) gave him, in egotism, a subject for a profound character study such as Molière presents in *Le Misanthrope*; yet he was too genial by nature to handle it forcibly, therefore this play occupies an unimportant place even among his comedies in verse. *The Dancing School* (*La Scuola di ballo*) should have afforded him a more congenial topic, but this piece is not even mentioned by Goldoni in his memoirs. *The Ward* (*La Pupilla*) [13] is a

[12] Had the lawyers who defended M. Edmond Rostand against the charge of plagiarism brought a few years since been aware of the existence of this play and also of Calderon's *L'Alcalde de Zalamea,* in which one character makes love on behalf of another beneath a balcony, a United States Court might have been spared the ignominy of a decision that made the American judiciary the laughing-stock of the civilized world.

[13] This comedy is different in plot and treatment from the musical interlude of the same name written in 1734.

comedy written in *versi sdruccioli,* a measure with the accent of each verse on the antepenultimate syllable. Interesting solely as an attempt on Goldoni's part to imitate Ariosto, it is, as Charles Rabany says, "an extra task Goldoni imposed upon himself which it is useless to impose upon the reader as well." [14]

Three society comedies in verse [15] of slightly different nature from the foregoing are those penned for performance in the private theatre of his friend and patron the Marquis Albergati-Capacelli. Being intended for amateur production they are shorter than those written for the professional boards, have fewer characters, and are less noteworthy too, even though the leading rôle in *The Witty Cavalier* (*Il Cavalier di spirito*), the most interesting of the three, portrays, as its author tells us, the qualities of his witty and genial young host, who himself played the part.

Yet, truly as these society and bourgeois comedies in verse paint the Venetian manners of their author's day, they are wholly inferior to his best prose comedies. Indeed, only occasionally is their awkward verse illumined by a graceful side-light, such as the following lines from one of the dullest of them [16] shed upon Venetian manners. Here a lady versed in gallantry instructs an unruly gentleman in the laws governing cicisbeism, in a spirit truly of the eighteenth century:

[14] *Carlo Goldoni; Le Théâtre et la vie en Italie au XVIIIe siècle.*
[15] *Il Cavalier di spirito, La Donna bizzarra,* and *L'Apatista.*
[16] *Il Cavalier giocondo.*

Go, straightway learn how to behave with ladies!
He who enlists in gallantry should do
His duty at all costs; though suffering, he
Should prove his worthiness to serve; rebuke
And rudeness both accept in all good part;
Pay dearly for his pleasantries and wiles;
Shun all occasion to displease and all
That might displease learn to foresee; his friends
Forsake and in the fair one's company
Immure himself; and whether she be sad
Or gay, unto her mood he must conform;
Nor should he vaunt the thing that pleases him,
But by her pleasure regulate his taste.
Even as my lady bids he should respond;
By night watch over her, and sigh by day;
Endure a rival—ay, turn pale or blush
With jealousy, yet never have the boldness
To tell the things he may have seen, in hope
Thus to regain the trifle he has lost.
His lady's hand ofttimes to strangers he
Must yield, yet never babble of revenge,
Nor take on airs. When she speaks he should answer,
And when she's silent, hold his tongue; he should
Perceive when speech, when silence, pleases her;
Impertinence or insult patiently
Endure, even at the risk of being thought
A simpleton. Let him who knows not how,
Refrain—thus must he do who would succeed.

The most noteworthy of Goldoni's society comedies in verse is *The Ball* (*Il Festino*), a play conceived and hurried to completion after the failure of *The Whimsical Old Man* had made the loungers in the Ridotto exclaim, "Goldoni is finished, Goldoni has emptied his bag." Indeed this five-act play in verse, written and produced within fifteen days and given

to the copyist act by act, as a *tour de force,* is made still more remarkable by the fact that it presents a spirited picture of fashionable Venetian life, and is by no means a bad play. It drags, to be sure, particularly in the third and fourth acts, where its action should quicken; yet its characterization is peculiarly true, Doralice, the cicisbea, for whose capricious smiles the Count of Belpoggio neglects a loving wife and squanders a fortune, being as exacting a *mondaine* as ever flounced a train, while her fashionable friends may still be met in the palaces of Venice or wherever worldlings congregate. Its title is derived from the ball the Count of Belpoggio gives in honour of Doralice, his flame; yet its interest lies less in its story than in its truthful satire upon fashionable life. It has a biographical interest also, as Goldoni thus relates:

> I contrived to have in a salon adjoining the ball-room an assembly of weary dancers. I turned the conversation to *The Whimsical Old Man.* I repeated all the ridiculous things which I had heard in the Ridotto, keeping up a dispute for and against the piece and the author, and my defence met with the approbation and applause of the public. Thus I proved that my bag was not empty and that my portfolio was not exhausted.

In this scene in the room adjoining the ball-room, as well as in two others,[17] Goldoni criticizes himself after the method of Molière,[18] one character being made to attack and another to defend his work. He

[17] Act I, Scene 5, and Act II, Scene 13.
[18] *La Critique de l'école des femmes.*

hoped, thereby, to confound his critics; yet the best refutation of the slurs that had been cast upon him was the play itself. A man who could in fifteen days pen so true a comedy,—even had prose instead of verse been the medium,—was in nowise "finished," nor was his bag of dramatic tricks empty. Indeed, among his prose comedies there is perhaps no more ruthless picture of the vices of the idle rich of Venice than *The Ball* presents, the Count of Belpoggio, both amorous dallier and spendthrift, being the type of luxurious patrician who was leading proud Venice to her ruin. In the words of the play:

> When table guests and dancers have withdrawn,
> Vile creditors his salon crowd at dawn.
> By night he blithely toes the glistening floor,
> By day he locks in shame his chamber door.

Naturalistic as is the picture Goldoni draws of society in *The Ball,* like his other rhymed plays in Tuscan it shows conclusively that prose, not verse, was the true form of his artistic expression. Nor does he appear in his comedies in Venetian verse in the light of a true poet, but rather as "the dear son and painter of nature" Voltaire once acclaimed him. Here, quite as truly as in the prose comedies he penned in the dialect of Venice, does he depict her sons and daughters; for, in spite of their rhymes, the versified comedies he wrote in the soft speech of Venice are prosaical both in conception and language.

That verse, even though written in dialect, cannot truly express the feelings of housewives, cooks, roy-

sterers, and peasants should have been apparent to even so indifferent a poet; yet this is the medium he used for five comedies of the life of his native city,[19] that are as naturalistic as any he penned in Venetian prose—not excepting *The Boors* and *The Chioggian Brawls*. Although there is scarcely a poetic thought in any of the five, they have a certain rhythmic charm, lacking in the "halting and ponderous Martellian verse, which deluged the merry city of the sea" [20]—a charm due, no doubt, to the fact that he was writing in his mother tongue. Yet, naturalistic as these five comedies are, they lack fine characterizations such as Lunardo, Don Marzio, and Mirandolina; therefore they cannot be ranked with his best prose comedies, although two of them, *The Maids-of-All-Work* (*Le Massere*) and *The Public Square* (*Il Campiello*), equal any of these in atmosphere and truth to nature.

The former, a comedy of life below-stairs, was the first of the five comedies in Venetian verse to be penned;[21] several maids-of-all-work employed in neighbouring households giving the play its title. The picture Goldoni here draws of life both above and below stairs shows that the relations between mis-

[19] *Le Massere; Le Donne di casa soa; I Morbinosi; Le Morbinose,* and *Il Campiello.*

[20] Giuseppe Ortolani: op. cit.

[21] In his memoirs Goldoni translates *Le Massere,* the title of this play, as *Les Cuisinières;* yet as Italian equivalents of the Venetian word *Massera,* Boerio's dictionary of the Venetian dialect gives *fante, fantesca serva,* and *casiera,* all of which signify servant rather than cook. As the servants from which the play takes its name are employed singly in small establishments, *The Maids-of-all-Work* is manifestly the correct translation.

tress and maid were quite as difficult in his day as they are now. Let us hope, however, that our modern servants are not so deficient in admirable qualities as these faithless Venetian maids-of-all-work who rob their masters and hoodwink them too, who introduce lovers into their mistresses's boudoirs and sell the gifts they have been tipped to deliver, and then go forth in mask and domino for the carnival holiday Goldoni tells us it was customary to accord them, there to frolic among their betters and play amorous tricks upon them. Indeed, the servants he presents not only in this play but in *The Sensible Wife,* where they tipple their employer's wine; in *Hazards of Country Life,* where they discuss their mistresses' love-affairs and drink the morning chocolate prepared for them; and in *The Upper Servant,* where one of them leads a household by the nose, are certainly as impertinent and thieving a crew as ever vexed the mistress of a house in any age. Still, Corallina in *The Devoted Servant* is an incorruptible housemaid, while Lucietta of *The New House* is a worthy member of her calling even though her tongue wags; hence his pictures of servants are not all drawn mercilessly. Moreover in this parting injunction to his maids-of-all-work, he shows such an appreciation of the qualities a good servant should possess, that apparently such were not unknown in Venice:

> Poor drudges, try to act with decency.
> Since to your hands we trust ourselves, good maids

Are worth far more than any golden treasure.
Would you betray those who give you your bread,
And irritate through wantonness your masters?
If you be scurvy, good maids may be had:
Dishonest servants we will send afar,
And to the good extend a willing hand.

Although Goldoni considered *The Maids-of-All-Work* the most thoroughly Venetian of his plays, like *The Housewives* (*Le Donne di casa soa*), its successor, and a play written, as he tells us, "to encourage good housewives and discourage bad ones," it may be dismissed as an excellent picture of manners written in rhyme that should have been prose, verse being a poor medium with which to detail either the admirable qualities of housewives or the rascalities of servants. Although true in atmosphere and natural in dialogue, these two comedies are both slender and obvious in plot, and undistinguished by any notable character study; a criticism that applies also to *The Jovial Men* (*I Morbinosi*), a play inspired by an outing on an island opposite Venice once enjoyed by a hundred and twenty jovial men of the city, of whom Goldoni was one. His words shall tell of the play's conception:

This piece was founded on fact: a merrily disposed individual proposed a picnic in a garden of the island called la Giudecca, a short distance from Venice. He gathered together a company of a hundred and twenty, and I was of the number. We all sat at the same table, which was comfortably served, and everything was conducted with the most admirable order and astonishing precision. He had no women at dinner, but a number arrived between the dessert and coffee. We had a charming ball, and we

passed the night very agreeably. The subject of this piece was only a fête; and it became necessary to enliven it by interesting anecdotes and comic characters. All these I found in our society; and, without offending any one, I endeavoured to avail myself of them.

The Jovial Men is a merry trifle held together by a slender thread of story concerning a jealous wife who tracks her lord to his jovial lair, and a shady opera singer, weary of stage life, who torments a pair of sparks with her charms, while intriguing for a husband. Its fascination lies, however, in its spirit of good fellowship: its hilarious merrymaking with wine-cup, music, and dance, and in such sprightly outbursts as the following lines, wherein Goldoni voices the charms of the fair fisher maidens who dwell upon the isle where his convivial spirits are gathered:

> Dost think Venetian girls alone are true
> And virtuous? Though we Giudeccans
> Are not nobly born, yet have we character.
> Let those who seek attractive girls, seek us—
> In taste and mien, Giudecca's maids are ne'er
> Excelled; a flower or ribbon in their hair,
> And I am sure men must admit their hearts
> Are stolen. In dancing *la forlana*
> Girls of Venice teach them naught. Of myself
> I speak not; I'm not one of them, but on
> The banks of this canal they shine like stars;
> Pretty faces, slender waists, little feet
> Entrancing: Ah, if you might see them here!
> Alas, they will not all step forth, I fear.

Having extolled his boon companions in *The Jovial Men,* Goldoni "paid court" during the follow-

ing year, so he tells us, "to the women of his land" in *The Jovial Women* (*Le Morbinose*), a comedy of carnival time in which a merry band of girls and married women play pranks upon a stiff and formal Tuscan until they imbue him with the blithesome spirit of their town, and love for one of their number too. Yet, full of innocent devilries as these ladies are, one cannot help pitying poor Zanetto, prototype of many a modern husband, whose wife "gads all day"; for when Zanetto's wife goes merrily forth to the piazza in mask and domino she takes with her the family purse and the keys of the pantry, too, thus forcing him to beg a surreptitious meal from the servant of one of her gay friends.

By far the most significant, as well as the most charming, of Goldoni's comedies in Venetian verse is *The Public Square* (*Il Campiello*) a play of the common people in which is depicted the life of one of those little open spaces called *campielli,* where two tortuous Venetian streets cross each other and a whole neighbourhood works and plays. Here in the sunlight, artisans hammer and pedlars shout, urchins prattle and women altercate; for here, away from the sluggish canals, the splash of the gondola's oar is not heard, nor my lady's laugh beneath her scented mask. The *campiello* which is the scene of this play, Goldoni tells us, "is surrounded by little houses inhabited by the lower orders, where gaming, dancing, and a hubbub take place"; yet the gaming is so superstitious, the dancing so spontaneous, and the hubbub

so voluble that only in a Latin land could they obtain, while only in Venice is the soft speech of this play lisped by her impetuous and light-hearted children. So slight is the plot that it can scarcely be called a play. Rather is it a rapidly moving picture of the jealousies and joys of the simple folk who dwell in the "little houses" of this *campiello*. From the moment Zorzetto appears with his basket of crockery prizes, to collect the copper *bezzi* of the housewives for *la venturina,* his lottery game, until pretty Gasparina, who uses z instead of s to show her plebeian neighbours she is a *zentildonna,* goes proudly off to wed an impoverished Neapolitan cavalier and repair his fortunes with the sequins her crabbed uncle has saved for her dowry, there is a succession of spirited scenes depicted in Goldoni's truest vein. We see the life of Venice and hear the gabble of her streets: the young make love, and both old and young eat, drink, gamble, dance, and speak ill of their neighbours, in a way so true to nature that we forget this softly rhymed picture couched in verses of varying measure is a play and not a little piece of life snatched bodily from the streets of Venice.

Indeed it is in his untranslatable, unconventional plays of the people, such as *The Public Square,* that Goldoni, the true poet of a people, is unique among the word's great dramatists. What matters it that this bit of dramatic gossamer is held together by the merest thread of a plot? Old Pasqua, the busy-body, and old Cate, the babbler, who squabble and tell each

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other plain truths, are not characters in a play, but rather two flesh-and-blood gossips who step into this *campiello* from their respective doorways, the one to sweep it clear of refuse with her meddlesome broom, the other to prattle its small talk. Moreover, their daughters, Lucietta and Gnese, are a pair of warm-blooded girls of Venice as ready to love as to dance. Anzoletto and Zorzetto, who drag the whole neighbourhood into lovers' quarrels as meaningless as those of Chioggia, are warm-hearted lads of Venice, too, as quick to embrace as to fight, when once a cavalier from Naples has offered to regale the neighbourhood if they will stop their quarrel. Yes, this *campiello* to which Goldoni leads us, across arched bridges and through a maze of ill-smelling streets, does not seem like the scene of a play; and when with pretty Gasparina we leave it and the fair city of which it is a homely part, well may we exclaim with her:

> Alas, my Venice, oh, my dear,
> How deep my grief now parting's near!
> Before I leave, I hail thee, then
> O dearest Venice, fare thee well,
> O Venice mine, ah, fare thee well,
> My good Venetians:—gentlemen!
> O Campiello dear, farewell;
> Or plain or fair I cannot tell—
> If plain it brings my heart unease,
> Yet fair's not fair unless it please.

XIV

EXPATRIATION

AFTER Carlo Gozzi's triumph, Goldoni accepted, it will be remembered, an engagement for two years as playwright of *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne* and bade farewell to the inconstant public he had served faithfully and brilliantly during fourteen laborious years. "He was stripped of his theatrical honours," says Baretti; while Chiari, his erstwhile rival, now entirely forgotten, retired to a country-house in the environs of Brescia.[1] Although his fickle countrymen worshipped at a false god's shrine, Goldoni's fame was still sufficient to insure him a livelihood abroad.

The first gentlemen of the King's bedchamber had instructed Francesco Antonio Zanuzzi, an actor of the Comédie Italienne, who knew the dramatist, to bid him come to Paris, the invitation being officially delivered to him by the French ambassador in Venice. Goldoni's Parisian engagement therefore was an official appointment; yet his salary seems to have been paid in part by private subscription. In a letter to a friend in Vienna, Favart, the father of

[1] *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy.*

French opéra comique, who became Goldoni's Parisian crony, says that he was to be paid seven thousand francs a year,[2] and that several lovers of Italian had promised to contribute a portion of that sum, one ardent man of letters who did not understand that language being willing to subscribe twenty-five louis "for the actors' gestures."

France was in the throes of the Seven Years' War and her finances were in a hopeless muddle; yet there was money enough both in her public treasury and in the purses of her citizens to hire a gifted foreigner whose praises had been sung by her foremost man of letters. With Voltaire's approval to give him courage, and the promise of a more bountiful salary than he had ever enjoyed in Venice, Goldoni made leisurely preparations for his journey. His aunt went to live with relatives, and his niece, Petronilla Margherita, was placed in a convent, the supervision of her education and welfare being confided to Jean Cornet, a Frenchman engaged in business in Venice with his elder brother Gabriel, the agent of the Elector of Bavaria. To his worthless brother Gian Paolo, Goldoni magnanimously consigned the income of such property as had escaped the wreck of the family fortune, and, after entrusting Count Gasparo Gozzi with the proof-reading of the subscription edition of his works which Pasquali was publishing, he left Venice during the month of April,

[2] In a letter to Albergati-Capacelli (Jan. 10th, 1764) Goldoni states that his salary was six thousand francs.

1762, accompanied by patient Nicoletta, his wife, and Antonio Francesco Goldoni, his nephew, then a lad of twelve or thereabouts.

Journeying by way of Padua and Ferrara to Bologna, he there visited the Marchese Albergati-Capacelli, and wrote for his host, though suffering from rheumatic fever, a merry play for music.[3] Being bled by candlelight, he had the great pleasure "of seeing his blood, black as mulberries, yet uninflamed, strong, and vigorous, gush forth as from a fountain." [4]

After his recovery he enjoyed for a time the attentions of both Albergati and the latter's cicisbea, the Contessa Orsi, then fared on to Parma to present the first two volumes of the Pasquali edition to his ducal patron Don Philip, spending on the way thither a day at Reggio in the congenial company of Paradisi, a poet engaged in translating Voltaire's tragedies.[5] At Parma he brushed up his French, obtained a renewal of his pension, was presented to the ladies of the ducal family, and made peace with Frugoni, then in his seventieth year, who was attached to the Parmesan court.

This aged poet, whose name was paraphrased by Baretti to signify affected language, had, it appears, paid metrical court some years previously to Aurisbe Tarsense, a lady who in un-Arcadian fields was the widow of a Venetian patrician of scant fortune,

[3] *La Bella verità.*

[4] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, July 2, 1762.

[5] Ibid.

named Giannantonio Gritti. Chiari, too, had sung her praises as the Eurilla of his pastoral verse, but Goldoni enjoyed her "passionate adoration." When in 1759 our dramatist addressed to her some verses in which Frugoni was satirized, the old bard's jealous anger burst its bounds and he did not make peace with him until he visited Parma on the way to France.[6] "This new Petrarch had his Laura in Venice," Goldoni says. "He sang from afar the graces and talents of charming Aurisbe Tarsense, a shepherdess of Arcadia, while I saw her every day. Frugoni was jealous of me and was glad to see me take my departure."

Having some volumes of his plays to present to Princess Henrietta of Modena, Goldoni went to her country seat when he left Parma and there passed three days "delightfully"; journeying thence to Piacenza, he and his family were entertained in that city by the Marquis Casati, a subscriber to the Pasquali edition, and from beneath his hospitable roof they travelled to Genoa, where, amid "the tears and sobs" of good Nicoletta's relations, they embarked in a felucca for Antibes.

After nearly foundering while doubling the Cape of Noli, the felucca luckily reached the roadstead of that town and remained at anchor there until the sea subsided sufficiently for her to proceed to Nice, where our travellers were glad to disembark and go by carriage to Antibes. "I set out from Nice the

[6] Giuseppe Ortolani: op. cit.; Achille Neri: *Aneddote goldoniane.*

next day," says Goldoni, "and crossed the Var, which separates France from Italy. I bade farewell anew to my country and invoked the shade of Molière to guide me in his."

At the frontier he "caught a first glimpse of French politeness"; for his trunks, which had been ransacked by Italian customs-officers, were not disturbed, while at Antibes the commandant refused to examine his passport, and told him "to leave quickly because Paris awaited him impatiently." Heedless of this admonition, he journeyed slowly by way of Marseilles, Aix, and Avignon, to Lyons, where, receiving a curt letter from Zanuzzi urging haste, he learned that the forces of the Comédie Italienne had been united since his departure from Venice with those of the Opéra Comique, the receipts of the Italians having sunk too low to warrant their sole use of the Hôtel de Bourgogne.

Though his talents had been engaged to buoy up the sinking fortunes of his countrymen, though he confesses that Zanuzzi's letter ought to have made him leave Lyons immediately, he tarried in that city nearly a fortnight in order to see its sights and be dined and wined by its rich manufacturers. Continuing his journey when it suited his convenience, he enjoyed the beauties of the fertile land through which he passed, and reached Villejuif, in the environs of Paris, on August 26th, 1762, more than four months after his departure from Venice. There he was met by Zanuzzi and Elena Savi, the leading lady of the

troupe he had come to serve. Escorting him to the capital in their own carriage, they lodged and supped him in their apartment in the Faubourg St. Denis, and when he opened his eyes on the morrow his awakening was as pleasant as his dreams, for he was "in Paris and happy."

Hastening forth on foot with Zanuzzi, he paid his respects to the Duc d'Aumont, the officiating gentleman of the king's bedchamber, catching, meanwhile, a sight of the great city he was "dying to see." In the evening he dined with Camilla Veronese, the soubrette of the Italian troupe, who was a daughter of a provincial pantaloon he had known at Feltre when he was coadjutor to the criminal chancellor of that town. After "a very dainty dinner," shared with an entertaining company, he went to the Hôtel de Bourgogne and listened to a French opéra comique which he found to be "a strange mixture of prose and tunes."

But he had not come to Paris merely to enjoy its sights and pleasures; therefore he rented an apartment near the Comédie Italienne and began to study the characteristics of the actors for whom he was to write comedies, a task in which he was materially aided by his neighbour Madame Francesco Riccoboni,[7] an actress who had recently retired from the

[7] Marie Jeanne de Heurles de Laboras de Mézières (1714–1792), translator of Fielding's *Amelia* and author of *Miss Jenny*, a novel Goldoni translated into Italian during the last years of his life. Her husband, the son of Luigi Riccoboni, was an actor and playwright, as well as the author of *L'Art du théâtre*.

stage to devote herself to literature, and who knew the Italian players so thoroughly that her account of their talents proved to be "very just" and worthy of her "honesty and sincerity."

The plays he wrote while in France form the topic of the succeeding chapter; hence it is only necessary to record here that during the two years of his engagement with the Comédie Italienne he worked faithfully in the fulfilment of his contract, some thirty scenarî and comedies being penned by him. The Italian players he served, being inexperienced in acting written plays and their public used to seeing them in extemporized farces, he was compelled to turn backward in his art and begin again the reform of comedy for which he had striven so valiantly in his native land. Meanwhile he learned to love Paris and her people.

His modest temporary lodgings—three rooms and a study, for which he paid a monthly rental of sixty-four francs—were in the Rue Comtesse d'Artois;[8] near by stood the Hôtel de Bourgogne, where the Italians played, and scarcely a stone's throw away were the Louvre and the Palais Royal. Living in its very heart he fell a victim to the allurement of the bright city he thus describes:

> Paris is a world in itself. Everything there is on a large scale; there is much that is good and much that is bad. Whether you go to the theatres, the promenades, or the pleasure resorts, every place is full—even to the churches, and everywhere there is a crowd. In a city of eight hundred thousand souls there must

[8] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, Sept. 6, 1762.

necessarily be more good and bad people than anywhere else . . . The rake will easily find the means to satisfy his passions. A good man will be encouraged in the exercise of his virtues. . . . The further I went the more I became absorbed in the ranks, the classes, the ways of living and the different modes of thinking. . . . But in the course of time I looked with another eye upon that immense city, its people, its amusements, and its dangers. I had had time for reflection and I had learned that the confusion I had experienced was not a physical or moral defect of the land; hence I decided in all good faith that curiosity and impatience had been the cause of my bewilderment, and that it was possible to enjoy Paris and be amused there, without growing weary, and without sacrificing one's time and tranquillity.

Before beginning his work at the Comédie Italienne, he obtained from its actors a furlough of four months for the purpose of studying their characteristics and requirements. While enjoying the leisure thus acquired he went to Fontainebleau, during the autumn of 1762, and witnessed there a command performance of his scenario, *Harlequin's Son Lost and Found.* But so many quips from Molière's *Imaginary Cuckold* (*Le Cocu imaginaire*) were interpolated, he says, that "the court was displeased and the play a failure." This bungling of his scenario by comedians greedy for laughs showed him that he did not have to do with such actors as he had left behind him in Italy, and that he was no longer the master he had been at home. He saw the royal family, however, the ministers and diplomats, and viewed at close range the glitter of a profligate court, "the Dauphin being gracious enough to speak to him twice." [9]

[9] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, Oct. 24th, 1762.

Upon returning to Paris he moved from his modest rooms in the rue Comtesse d'Artois to more pretentious quarters overlooking the gardens of the Palais Royal, which he furnished tastefully at an expense of four thousand francs "in the hope that the Muses would descend more willingly upon the verdure surrounding his study and the allurement of the light o' loves who strolled beneath his windows.[10] From his study he could see *petits maîtres* ogling pretty women, ardent lovers lolling with their mistresses beneath the trees, and—a novel sight certainly to one who came from the land of cicisbeism—husbands promenading contentedly with their wives. Opposite his window stood the famous Cracow tree, under the spreading branches of which newsmongers discussed the affairs of the nation; on the footway before the neighbouring Café de Foy light-hearted merrymakers breakfasted in the open air.

Such relaxations were helpful to him at times, he says, "since they rested his mind agreeably and he was able to return to his work with more vigour and cheerfulness." He had need, alas, of both these qualities, for when the Italian actors produced the first comedy he wrote for their stage,[11] it failed so dismally that it was withdrawn after its fourth performance. Yet the time for a successful play was propitious. War had drained the resources of the nation during seven ignoble years, and peace was being signed in Paris at that very moment.

[10] Letter to Albergati, Jan. 24, 1763.

[11] *L'Amore paterno.*

Although the French public was attuned to merriment, Goldoni had not yet learned its taste, and the chagrin he experienced was so great that he was on the point of leaving Paris. Pride and the charm of that fair city kept him at his task, however, until he had fulfilled his contract; but after his first failure the Italian actors lost faith in him. "They won't learn comedies that are written," he complained, "and they don't know how to improvise them." When the first year of his engagement drew to a close he vowed that if the second had no better fortune he would leave Paris. "Man does not live by bread alone," he confessed to his friend Albergati,[12] "for reputation is the food of upright men, and that will make me return to Italy sooner." But instead of forsaking the country of his adoption, he acceded to the actors' demands for improvised comedies.

Early in the second year of his engagement one of the scenarî he penned [13] proved so successful that he was able to announce to Albergati the establishment of his Parisian reputation; a triumph fully attested by his contemporaries, since Grimm saw in this prostitution of his dramatic talents to the exigencies of the theatre, enough material for three or four comedies; while Favart declared that it forced all the French actors to admit there had been no such genius since Molière. Moreover, Desboulmiers, a lesser light, exclaimed that "it would be necessary to be

[12] Letter of Aug. 15th, 1763.

[13] *Gli Amori di Arlecchino e di Camilla,* produced Sept. 27th, 1763.

Molière in order to be able to praise its author worthily." [14]

The gall of previous failure was tempered by this success; yet to win it Goldoni resorted to the tricks of the improvised comedy he had fought so valiantly to banish from the Italian stage. "Any sacrifice, however, was sweet," he declares, "any trouble bearable for the pleasure of remaining two years in Paris"; his love for that engaging city being enhanced, no doubt, by the many friends he acquired as a stranger within its hospitable gates, and the respect paid to his talents by its actors and playwrights.

As a distinguished foreigner he had the entrée to the Comédie Française, and on the occasion of his first visit to that classic playhouse, when he saw Molière's *Misanthrope* performed by "incomparable actors," he longed to see one of his own pieces played by "such fellows,"—a satisfaction the Fates, as will be seen, had in store for him. It is not strange that he should have been impressed by the acting of *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe française,* since in their ranks at that time were Mme. Champmeslé, Mlle. Clairon, Lekain, Préville, and Molé—a histrionic galaxy that perhaps has never been eclipsed. To the art of the Comédie Française Goldoni pays this still merited tribute:

> Here is the school of declamation where nothing is forced, either in gesture or expression; the steps, the movements of the arms, the glances, the dumb scenes are studied; yet art hides the study under the semblance of nature.

[14] E. Maddalena: *Goldoni e Favart;* Giulio Caprin: op. cit.; etc.

Though the plays he saw at the House of Molière were surpassingly acted, one of them, Diderot's *Father of a Family* (*Père de famille*) involved him in a contretemps with its distinguished author. When the production of this didactic comedy was announced, Fréron, the journalist whom Voltaire had satirized upon the stage, maliciously said in print that, as Diderot had filched scenes from Goldoni's *True Friend (Il Vero amico)* to embellish his *Natural Son (Le Fils naturel),* it was reasonable to suppose that since the Venetian had already given birth to a *Father of a Family,* chance might again make the comedies of these actors coincide.

"God gave Diderot every quality," says Arsène Houssaye;[15] and in the generous distribution resentment was apparently included, for the great encyclopædist was so nettled by this largely unmerited charge of plagiarism that he took occasion to dismiss the dramatist he was accused of imitating as "Charles Goldoni, who has written some sixty farces."[16] Moreover, when his Venetian rival, accompanied by Duni, the composer, paid him a ceremonious visit in the hope of convincing him that his indignation was unmerited, Diderot resented so warmly the wound Goldoni had inadvertently dealt his pride that Duni, to mollify him, was obliged to quote these lines of Tasso:

> 'T is time all bitter memories were effaced,
> And bygone things by amnesty embraced.

[15] *Histoire du XLme Fauteuil.* [16] *De la Poësie dramatique.*

Diderot "appeared to subscribe to these sentiments," says Goldoni, and after reciprocal compliments had passed between the encyclopædist and himself, he took his leave, feeling that he had gained the esteem of a man who had been sadly prejudiced against him and that he might count that a triumphal day. It proved at least a convivial day, since he dined that evening with a coterie of nine literary intimates who, because they broke bread together every Sunday, styled themselves the *Dominicaux,* their weekly meetings for good fellowship and cheer being termed *Dominicales.*

Favart, the librettist, whose romantic love-story still awaits a novelist's pen, was a member of this club, and he probably introduced his Italian colleague to its select precincts. Even before the latter's advent in France, Favart had acclaimed him "our dear Goldoni"; moreover, three or four days after his arrival, the transalpine dramatist praised Favart in verse, "his house being one of the first, if not the first, he frequented in Paris." [17]

To the end of his life Favart remained Goldoni's friend, and so did Pierre Antoine de la Place, the journalist—another of these Dominicaux; the other members of the coterie being De la Garde, the critic who was La Pompadour's secretary; Saurin, the Academician; Antoine Louis, secretary of the Royal Academy of Surgery; Jouen, a fameless adherent; the younger Crébillon, and the Abbé de la Porte, a

[17] E. Maddalena: *Goldoni e Favart.*

gazetteer whose aim was to discredit all that scurrilous Fréron praised.

Had not Goldoni penned *The Inquisitive Women* before he came to France, this play might have been inspired by the *Dominicaux,* for the only law governing their festivities, he tells us, "was to exclude women." Yet brazen Sophie Arnould, of angelic voice and racy tongue, invaded a *dominicale* held at La Pompadour's hôtel with De la Garde as the host, and so captivated the misogynic revellers with her beauty and wit that they proclaimed her their "sole dominical sister." [18]

Having no rôle that day, the diva bade them attend the opera with her, but the songs Goldoni had heard in drawing-rooms made him loath to subject his Italian tympani to the strain of French screeching on a larger scale. To convince him that he misjudged the native music, fair Sophie sang him a song with her own charming voice. "Kiss me," she cried, as the last notes died away, "and come to the opera," a dual invitation a man addicted to soubrettes could not well withstand. At the opera he found that "everything was beautiful and magnificent, except the music," and shocked his French friends by declaring when the curtain fell that "it had been heaven for the eyes but hell for the ears," a verdict according with Rousseau's dictum that "there is neither measure nor melody in France."

Thus in the agreeable society of literary men and

[18] Dedication to Favart of *Un Curioso accidente.*

stage-folk, Goldoni passed the leisure moments of the years he served the Comédie Italienne, and though he had turned life's half-way mark, his eyes were not too dim, it would seem, to blink at the sight of a pretty face. Regarding the wiles of Parisian soubrettes he is singularly silent; yet he says it would be impossible "to be more blithe and pleasing" than Camilla Veronese, the soubrette of the Italian troupe; so perhaps his susceptible heart was victimized by her charms. At all events, like the Pantalone of his *Whimsical Old Man,* he was "a well preserved winter pear with plenty of pulp, juice, and substance," since during the second year of his engagement with the Comédie Italienne he was haled before a French tribunal by a certain Catherine Lefébvre and charged with being her betrayer. The lady bore an alias, however, and the case was settled out of court; therefore, it is to be hoped that good Papa Goldoni, instead of being guilty at his ripe age of such an iniquity, had merely been unwary enough to be entrapped by a wily blackmailer on the outlook for guileless foreigners.[19]

Although biographical candour prevents the glossing over of this shady incident, it is a relief, nevertheless, to turn from it to an honourable intercourse. Goldoni had known in Venice, it will be remembered, Madame du Boccage, whom he had called "the Parisian Sappho," and in her "agreeable and instruc-

[19] E. Campardon: *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne.* V. Carrera: *Di un nuovo documento intorno alba vita di C. G.*

tive conversation" had whiled away many a pleasurable hour. When he set out for Paris, Count Algarotti, a cosmopolitan literary globe-trotter of considerable notoriety and little merit, charged him, on behalf of Farsetti, a poet, with the delivery to her of a book. Goldoni mislaid it and several months passed before he could find it, and meanwhile he dared not pay his respects to his talented friend, the poetess. When he finally found Farsetti's book he presented it, together with profuse apologies for his dereliction, to Madame du Boccage, who forthwith invited him to dine. "Goldoni loves Paris madly," she wrote Algarotti after the dramatist had been her guest.[20] "Even the hubbub of the streets pleases him, and save for the opera and the high cost of provisions, he is enchanted with everything."

In the salon of Madame du Boccage notable people of all nationalities gathered, "every foreigner distinguished for his good qualities or his talents being eager upon arriving in Paris to pay court to her." Her genial Venetian guest was *persona grata* also in the drawing-rooms of the Countess Bianchetti, a charming fellow-countrywoman, and Madame Pothovin d'Huillet, the widow of a Parisian legal light, who spoke Italian fluently. He so bored Madame du Deffand, however, when he read her one of his best comedies, that to Horace Walpole she pronounced it "the coldest and flattest play of the day." [21]

[20] Letter to Algarotti, March 24th, 1763.

[21] Letter to Walpole, Oct. 9th, 1771. The play was *Le Bourru bienfaisant.*

Yet all Frenchwomen of intelligence did not thus decry Goldoni's talent. Jeanne Françoise Floncel, the wife of a noted bibliophile, translated two acts of his *Venetian Advocate* into French, while "a charming lady," whom he fails to name, not only introduced him to a Parisian dandy as "the Molière of Italy," but so encouraged him by praising some scenarî [22] he had outlined for the Comédie Italienne that he made from them a pleasing trilogy of written comedies for the stage of his native city.

At the Venetian embassy he was ever a welcome guest, and to the Chevalier Tiepolo, the ambassador, he dedicated the first comedy he penned in France.[23] Though Tiepolo soon retired from the service, his successors, Andrea Gradenigo and Sebastiano and Giovanni Mocenigo, continued the ambassadorial courtesy, the last named being the patrician whose wedding to a doge's daughter Goldoni had attended in 1752. At the table of Voltaire's friend, Count d'Argental, the Parmesan plenipotentiary, as well as in his private theatre, there was always a seat for our dramatist, and under this hospitable roof he met many a congenial literary amateur. The Dutch ambassador, too, honoured him with his protection, while with his excellency's colleagues of the diplomatic corps, he "passed agreeably," he says, "a considerable portion of his time."

Only his failure to satisfy his dramatic ambitions

[22] *Gli Amori di Arlecchino e di Camilla; La Gelosia di Arlecchino; Le Inquietudini di Camilla.* [23] *L'Amore paterno.*

marred the pleasure of his life in Paris, for he was treated with distinction by society, whilst among the *Dominicaux* he found the good companions "that do converse and waste the time together." The two most notable Frenchmen in his own profession he does not confess to knowing; but Marivaux, whose talents were only begrudgingly recognized by his contemporaries, was dying almost in obscurity, whilst the star of Beaumarchais's genius has not yet risen. Voltaire, whose sponsorship had given Goldoni an international reputation, was in Switzerland, and Rousseau he did not know until a later date; but Marmontel "honoured him with his friendship" and praised his work in the *Mercure de France.*

When the glory of the *Dominicaux* had waned, Goldoni assisted Favart and De la Place in the formation of a new club he styles a *pique-nique,* which met once a week at L'Epée de Bois, an inn near the Louvre. At this convivial board he became intimate with a coterie of minor literary and dramatic lights, among whom the poets Laujon and Colardeau are perhaps the least obscure. But the *pique-nique* club was disrupted by the introduction of an uncongenial pamphleteer who had criticized one of its members adversely; therefore "it ended," Goldoni says, "like the *Dominicale.*"

Thus in dining and wining, in dalliance and agreeable converse, he passed the idle moments of his two years' engagement with the Comédie Italienne, his dutiful wife being immured, meanwhile, like the

wife of one of his inimitable boors. "She amused herself little in Paris," he assured Albergati, "because she could not understand or make herself understood"; whilst he, on the contrary, "spoke and understood either well or badly and enjoyed himself." In truth he found Paris "a fine region for a man who liked good society," and although all of its people were not sincere, none were displeasing, courtesy being, as he says, "the national characteristic." [24]

When in the spring of 1764 his engagement with the Comédie Italienne came to an end, the moderate success his plays had enjoyed made the Italian actors loath to renew their contract with him,[25] whilst he was unwilling to continue his humiliating efforts to please the French public with scenarî instead of written comedies. Moreover, "six thousand francs were not enough for a well-bred man to live upon in Paris," he complained, and he could not endure seeing "incapable actors earn fifteen thousand," [26] an unjust disparity that still obtains between the playwright's royalties and the actor's salary, for without plays that please the million, even the most brilliant of stars will bring ruin to his manager.

Being in a quandary, Goldoni thought of returning to Venice, whence Vendramin was importuning him

[24] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, Oct. 25, 1762.

[25] According to A. G. Spinelli, *Fogli Sparsi*, on March 9, 1764 Goldoni was no longer playwright of the Comédie Italienne, but the gentlemen of the King's Chamber retained Goldoni in Paris. He continued to write occasionally for the Comédie Italienne until Easter, 1765. See also Goldoni's letter of April 16, 1764, in Masi, *Lettere*.

[26] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, Jan. 10th, 1764.

for comedies; but there his arch-enemy's theatrical fables were still the vogue, and there Baretti was accusing him of having "debauched the minds and hearts of his countrymen." "Good, bad, or indifferent though I may be," he complained bitterly,[27] "Baretti can neither add anything to me nor subtract anything from me"; yet he did not subject himself to the immediate sting of this critic's literary scourge. From Lisbon, Vienna and London he received tempting offers, but he loved Paris, and "Dame Fortune," he said, "wished him to be there." [28]

"A lucky star came to his aid," he declares, "in the person of Mademoiselle Sylvestre, reader to the Dauphiness, Marie Josèphe de Saxe, mother of Louis XVI." That lady, the daughter of a Saxon painter, received from her compatriot the Dauphiness "all the credit that her talents and demeanour merited." Besides, she understood Italian and had read Goldoni's comedies, so when she learned of his reluctance to leave Paris, she suggested his name to her royal mistress as an aspirant for the post of court instructor in Italian. As the outcome of this friendly intercession, he was engaged to teach the fourth born of Louis XV's ten legitimate children, Madame Adélaïde, whose deceased sister, Princess Louise Elisabeth, or Madame L'Infante, as she was called, had been the wife of his patron, the Duke of Parma. When he presented himself at the door of the Dauph-

[27] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, April 16, 1764.
[28] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, March 18, 1765.

iness in the palace at Versailles, his friend Favart [29] says he mistook the smiling woman who greeted him at the threshold for a lady-in-waiting.

"Welcome, Monsieur Goldoni," she said; "I hear that you like France."

"Yes, madame," he answered.

"Very well, then, we wish you to remain, since it gives you pleasure. Would you like to teach Madame Adélaïde Italian?"

"Ah, madame," he exclaimed; "it is too . . . too . . .

"Follow me," said the lady, relieving his embarrassment; "I will take you to her," and when she saw his hesitation she said:

"I believe you don't know me."

"No, madame," he answered, "I have not that honour."

"It 's an acquaintance to make," she laughed, "and I hope it will be a good acquaintance for both you and me."

Leading him to Madame Adélaïde's apartment, she said with "bourgeois familiarity":

"Sister, let me introduce your teacher"; whereupon the amazed dramatist realized for the first time that the supposed lady-in-waiting was the Dauphiness herself.

Madame Adélaïde proved equally gracious.

"Are you sure you wish me for a pupil?" she asked;

[29] Letter to Count Giacomo Durazzo, March 5, 1765.

and when she saw he was too embarrassed to do more than bow, she continued:

"These are the arrangements I propose. Except on fête days and Sundays, we will take an hour's lesson every day in the morning. No, not every day, for you may have matters to attend to in Paris. I don't wish to disturb you; therefore we will work only three days a week; but without bothering you, for if you have something important on hand you will be at liberty to tell me. But you must n't trouble yourself about anything. We will get lodgings for you here. You will live with us, for we are simple folk."

The hapless Dauphin, who died within the year, strolled into the room, and, treating Goldoni with equal kindness, showed him some Italian songs. Nothing being said regarding emoluments, the new tutor retired when it suited the royal pleasure, glorying in so honourable an employment, and "sure of the bounty of his august pupils"; "Providence," as he wrote his friend Cornet,[30] "having betokened its blessings, and God having freed him from the actors," who, as he remarks in his memoirs, "were perhaps not vexed at getting rid of him."

His post, however, was not the sinecure Favart's account of his audience with the royal family would indicate, for instead of giving Madame Adélaïde an hour's lesson three times a week, in a letter to Al-

[30] Feb. 24, 1765.

bergati,[31] written soon after he began his new duties, Goldoni says that he taught her five times a week, the lessons lasting from two and a half to three hours, with the time divided into four equal parts, devoted respectively to reading Muratori's annals, to a philological discussion of the Italian and French languages, to the reading and translation of the tutor's own comedies, and to speaking, writing, and arguing in Italian. A rigorous morning's work it would seem; yet his royal pupil was no pampered princess, Mesdames de France, despite their father's moral laxity, having been strenuously reared.

Lodgings in the Château de Versailles were assigned Goldoni [32] within a few weeks after his duties as royal tutor began. Meanwhile Madame Adélaïde sent a post-chaise every day to fetch him from Paris, and on one of these journeys, while reading Rousseau's *Lettres de la montagne,* he suddenly lost the use of his eyes. The book fell from his hand, he says, and he could not see sufficiently to pick it up. He could distinguish light, however, and when he reached the château, managed to grope his way to Madame Adélaïde's apartment and take his accustomed seat on a footstool. The princess noted his agitation, but he was too proud to confess the cause. Believing he could fulfil his duties, he opened the book they had been reading on the previous day, but

[31] March 18, 1765.

[32] In a letter to Albergati-Capacelli, May 3, 1765, he says that his apartment in the Château was situated *au second escalier attenant à La Galerie des Princes au fond du corridor N. 107.*

he could not see the print and was obliged to acknowledge his disability. "It is impossible," he says, "to depict the kindness, the tenderness, the compassion of that great princess," for it was not the salutary eye-washes she brought him with her own hand or the attentions of her physician that made him recover his sight, but her "kindness." His recovery was not complete, however, since he lost entirely the use of his left eye.

Although the blindness of an eye was to his complacent mind "but a trifling inconvenience," at night he was obliged to have a light beside him, a vexation when playing cards, for when he moved his seat he was forced to carry a candle, much to the annoyance of the ladies with whom he gamed. He was a crafty player, however, and one night at Versailles he waited until Louis XV, who had the reputation of being lucky, held the bank at lansquenet; then risked upon it successfully six louis of his moderate means. He was a discreet player, too, at least in his old age, one who "preferred winning six francs to losing them"; but like his associates at court, he played habitually, since he could not pass an evening, he confesses, "without doing anything, and after the news of the day had been told, and one's neighbours, and even one's friends, had been criticized, to game was absolutely necessary."

His post in the household of Madame Adélaïde, or Madame Troisième, as she was jokingly styled until the successive deaths of her twin elder sisters

gave her the quality of first-born,[33] brought Goldoni into intimate contact with court life. Although his royal pupil told him that she and her family were simple folk, she was nevertheless jealous of her rank and a stickler in matters of etiquette. Moreover, when her nephew married Marie Antoinette and mounted the throne, she became the most meddlesome of *Mesdames tantes,* as Louis XV's surviving daughters were then called.[34] She showed none but her good qualities to Goldoni, however, or else he was a more accomplished courtier than he is willing to acknowledge, he being ever warm in his praise of her. Though she neglected for a considerable time to recompense his services in the bountiful way he had expected, she was gracious enough to chat with his wife for half an hour on a certain occasion,[35] and she permitted that worthy helpmate to accompany her lord during the summer of 1765 when the King and court went *en villégiature* to Marly and Compiègne.

While at the latter place, Goldoni received news of the death of his benefactor, the Spanish Infant, Don Philip, Duke of Parma, and mourned his loss so deeply that the melancholia of his younger days began to affect him once more. But his spirits were soon brightened by the renewal of the Parmesan pension he had enjoyed for nine years, his friend Count d'Argental, the Parmesan plenipotentiary,

[33] Louise-Marie, the third child of Louis XV, died in infancy.
[34] Casimir Stryienski: *Mesdames de France.*
[35] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, May 13, 1765.

being the kind functionary who brought this lucky event to pass. With his grief thus substantially assuaged, he was able to take a pleasure trip to Chantilly before returning to his duties at Versailles.

While following Louis XV and his court on the *grands* or *petits voyages,* or while fulfilling his pedagogic duties in the palace at Versailles, he was able to view court life familiarly and enjoy occasions of intimacy with the royal family, such as he thus describes:

I wrote an Italian cantata which I had set to music by an Italian composer, and I presented it to the Dauphiness, who, in accepting it, graciously commanded me to come to hear it played in her rooms after supper. On this occasion I learned a point of etiquette of which until then I had been ignorant. I entered the royal apartment at 10 o'clock in the evening and presented myself at the door of the *cabinet des nobles.* The usher did not prevent me from entering: Monseigneur le Dauphin and Madame la Dauphine being at table, I stepped aside to watch them sup. A lady-in-waiting came toward me and asked if I had the entrée in the evening. "I do not know, madame," I answered, "the difference between the entrée in the daytime and the entrée in the evening. The Princess herself commanded me to come to her room after supper. I came too soon perhaps, but I did not know the etiquette." "Monsieur," answered the lady, "there is none for you; you may remain." I own that my self-esteem was not a little gratified on this occasion.

I remained, and when the Prince and Princess retired to their apartments, I was summoned and my cantata performed. The Dauphiness played the harpsichord; Madame Adélaïde accompanied her on the violin, and Mademoiselle Hardy (afterwards Madame de la Brusse) sang. The music gave pleasure and compliments were paid the author of the words, which I accepted modestly. I wished to take my leave, but Monsieur le Dauphin had the goodness to detain me. He sang and I had the good fortune to hear

him; but what did he sing?—a pathetic oratorio called *The Pilgrim at the Sepulchre.*

Like the great Frenchman to whom he has been injudiciously compared, Goldoni filled a minor post at court, content, ay, even proud to be in the royal service. But Molière became a courtier to further his art and outwit his enemies, and the Italian to keep the wolf from his door; therefore the fawning of these geniuses of comedy is certainly more venial than venal.

Goldoni, however, confessed himself a poor sycophant. "If I did not profit by the royal favour," he avers, "it was my own fault, for I did not know how to beg. I was at court, yet I was not a courtier." But he was not entirely devoid of parasitical qualities, since he acknowledges that when he found himself one day in the presence of the Dauphin, the Dauphiness, and Mesdames de France, he seized the opportunity "to present and recommend his nephew." [36] Moreover, when offered an engagement in London (1770), he again belied his declaration that he was not a courtier, for although he was anxious to see a city "that alone could dispute the supremacy with Paris," the time of the royal marriages was approaching and he wished to be present at these festivities. "Furthermore it was not the King of England who invited me," he exclaims, "but the managers of the opera, who wished to attach me to their enterprise."

[36] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, May 13, 1765.

THE DANCING LESSON

Gallerie dell'Accademia

When he accepted the post of tutor to Madame Adélaïde and her sisters, he relied on their bounty for his livelihood; a misplaced confidence, it would appear, since he declares that during the first year of his tutorship he received but a hundred louis from the royal treasury. But a greater misfortune assailed him. His protector the Dauphin died (Dec. 20, 1765) and was soon followed to the grave by his fond wife, while the King lost his father-in-law. Owing to the period of court mourning that ensued, Madame Adélaïde discontinued her Italian lessons, and one fine morning the key of Goldoni's apartment in the palace was demanded, he and his family being ejected "to make room," as he expresses it, "for some better man."

Though he saw his august friends from time to time and was treated with kindness by them, Goldoni did not know how to make them aware of his condition, he declares; while they were too overcome with grief to think of him. To be near the court, though no longer of it, he rented lodgings in Versailles. "Fortune has made game of me," [37] he sighed, and as his royalties from the plays he had sent Vendramin materialized slowly, he was obliged to borrow a hundred sequins from the Abate Sciugliaga, the Dalmatian friend who had once defended him against the attacks of the Chiaristas. Within the year, however, he was able to inform Albergati [38] that Madame Adélaïde had assured him of her pro-

[37] Letter of Oct. 8, 1765. [38] Letter of May 26, 1766.

tection and had presented him with a gold snuff-box worth sixty louis, as well as a hundred louis in cash. Seconded by Mesdames Victoire and Sophie, her sisters, Madame Adélaïde demanded for him the title and emoluments of *Instituteur d'Italien des Enfans de France,* and when the ministry objected to creating a new post to drain further an impoverished treasury, she insisted that she was merely asking a just recompense for services already rendered. By demanding a pension of six thousand livres a year for her protégé, she managed to obtain four thousand, from which sum four hundred livres were deducted annually for the tax called the *vingtième.*[39] Regarding this royal benefaction, Goldoni says:

> My income was not very large; yet I must be just. What had I done to merit it? I had left Italy for France. The Comédie Italienne did not suit me, and I had only to return home. I became attached, however, to the French people. Three years of an easy, honourable, and agreeable service procured for me the pleasure of remaining among them. Should I not consider myself fortunate? Should I not be contented?

After obtaining a pension for their genial tutor, Mesdames de France employed in other studies the hours they had devoted to Italian. They had told him that he would have their three nephews as scholars; yet the only one of these princes willing to study Italian was tutored by a Frenchman, hence

[39] Bachaumont, writing in his journal under the date Jan. 12, 1769, says, "The King has just given a pension of four thousand livres to the Sieur Goldoni, called to France by the Italian actors several years ago to uphold their theatre, and since appointed to teach Mesdames the language in which he has given very interesting plays."

Goldoni was left without employment. To be nearer "the theatres that glitter only in Paris" he removed his lodgings thither, although he kept a *pied à terre* at Versailles, because "it was to his interest to pay court to his august protectresses and see if the Italian literature and language might not gain partisans among the young princes and princesses."

After obtaining a comfortable pension with which to temper the needs of his declining years, he bestirred himself on behalf of his nephew, "a kind and docile young man," as he says, "fit for some good employment." Madame Adélaïde interceded with the Duc de Choiseul in the younger Goldoni's behalf, and secured for him a tutorship in Italian at the Royal Military School. But Antonio Francesco no sooner received this appointment than his post was promptly abolished; whereupon his uncle obtained his nomination as interpreter in the Corsican Bureau. When this position was likewise suppressed, he received a similar appointment in the War Office, where he was "lucky enough to please his superiors and receive from them various tokens of their kindness." "If my journey to France had been productive of nothing else than the establishing of this dear child," the uncle exclaims, "I should always extol myself for having undertaken it." Although childless, Goldoni loved his nephew as a son; the young man was of mediocre talent, he confesses, and he thought at one time of sending him to Canada.

Moreover, despite his long residence in France, Antonio Francesco was unable to write the French language correctly,[40] and had but a rudimentary education in his own; therefore his fond uncle had reason to rejoice at having secured for him a governmental sinecure.

"Though at court, I was not a courtier," is the refrain Goldoni repeats in his memoirs; yet he feathered his family nest with preferment, and delighted in the society of "dukes, duchesses, *cordons bleus,* and marshals."[41] Even his pen was plied obsequiously. Though teeming with accounts of royal weddings and court festivities, his memoirs contain not a word regarding the appalling condition of the French people, or the mighty tempest that was gathering to engulf a rotten monarchy. Surely none but an ardent courtier could pronounce so notorious a debauchee as Louis XV "the most clement of kings, the most tender of fathers, and the most gentle of masters"! Yet Goldoni enjoyed royal beneficence at a time when he sorely needed it. Moreover, the reigning family of France, headed by ill-starred Louis XVI, subscribed for a hundred and forty-seven copies of his memoirs; hence it is but natural to find their pages as obsequious to kingship as the comedies of Molière, another recipient of royal bounty.

Like those of his great predecessor in his craft,

[40] E. Maddalena: *Lettere inedite del Goldoni,* and A. G. Spinelli: *Fogli Sparsi del Goldoni.*

[41] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, April 2, 1765.

Goldoni's plays were sometimes acted before the court, and long after his engagement with the Comédie Italienne had come to a hapless end, he was inspired by "the general spirit of gladness and enthusiasm" that reigned at the time of the Dauphin's wedding to Marie Antoinette (1770) to write in the language of his adopted country *The Beneficent Bear (Le Bourru bienfaisant),* the only masterpiece that graced the years he passed in France. His courtiery, therefore, was not barren of good, even though it belied his frank nature. Perhaps, as Giulio Caprin declares,[42] he was the "most sincere and modest of courtiers"; yet a courtier he remained so long as he had the strength to hobble in the King's wake, his heart ever beating in the royal presence with as much "pleasure and subjection" as that of good Nicoletta when Madame Adélaïde deigned to speak with her.

Indeed it is idle for him to exclaim that pride played no part in his life[43] when it peeps from the pages of his memoirs many a time. It is idle, too, for him to declare that he did not know how to beg, since he possessed a marked faculty for getting august people to solicit favours for him, and on more than one occasion deliberately begged himself. In 1775, for instance, when Louis the young Dauphin had succeeded his profligate grandfather as King of France, Goldoni, on being summoned to court to teach Italian to Princess Clotilde, the new monarch's

[42] Op. cit. [43] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, May 13, 1765.

sister, was quick to point out that his pension, having been granted for services to Mesdames de France, did not requite him for the instruction of the entire family. He taught this royal pupil in a manner as unhampered by confusing syntax as the Berlitz method of to-day; yet in the bustle caused by her wedding his demands were disregarded, and he was obliged to bide a more favourable moment for their pressing.

He felt the pinch of poverty so keenly, meanwhile, that he borrowed twenty-five louis from Vittore Gradenigo, secretary of the Venetian embassy,[44] and double that sum from Marco Zeno, the ambassador who had succeeded Giovanni Mocenigo. Some three months later, because the King's sisters, "instead of making his fortune, had wrought his ruin" by holding out false hopes, he confessed his inability to repay these loans. Indeed he was in such straits at this time that he begged permission to return to Italy, where his meagre pension would better support his state, while, to repay his debts, he offered to sell Gradenigo his library, which included an edition of two hundred and fifty volumes of French plays given him by Voltaire.[45]

Fortune soon smiled on him, however, when, abetted by Princess Elisabeth, another of the King's sisters to whom he gave Italian lessons, and by the Queen and *Mesdames tantes* as well, he presented

[44] Letter to Vittore Gradenigo, Feb. 19, 1780.
[45] Letter to Vittore Gradenigo, May 5, 1780.

Louis XVI a bill for his services, and obtained a royal gratuity of six thousand livres with which to pay his debts. Declaring that the harsh winds of Versailles distressed his nerves and revived his vapours, he obtained from the clement monarch the reversion of his tutorship in favour of his nephew, to whom an annual grant of twelve hundred livres was made, his own pension of four thousand livres, less the accustomed *vingtième,* being awarded him for life.

In declaring that he did not know how to ask favours, he certainly controverts the truth; yet in justice to his candid character, these words of Giulio Caprin [46] may be pertinently quoted:

> His honest heart, ever ready for good impulse, even after so many hard trials, beat only with a gratitude which became intense emotion when the royal favour was shown in its most visible ways.

After stationing his nephew well in life and obtaining his own release from courtly duties and financial troubles, Goldoni retired from windy Versailles to Paris, where "the less strenuous air was more like his temperament." When he laid aside his three-cornered hat and buckled shoes to enjoy by his own fireside the comfort of Pantalone's skull-cap and slippers, he was in his seventy-third year and his life-work was ended. Prowling about the streets of Paris, or enjoying the society of his numerous French friends, he was to pass many a tranquil day before

[46] Op. cit.

revolutionary terror came to reign in France. and death to free his own kindly soul.

During the seventeen years he had lived in a foreign land he had penned a goodly number of comedies, opéras bouffes, and scenarî for the Comédie Italienne, as well as for the theatres of Venice, Lisbon, and London. While the plays he wrote in France are being examined and his talents compared with those of Molière, he shall be left in the enjoyment of the first hours of true leisure he had known since Thalia first apprenticed him to her exacting art. He loved the gay city in which the lot of his declining years was cast, yet he had not forgotten the carnival din of his cherished birthplace, or the merry song of her gondoliers. In the land of his expatriation he could still exclaim:

> From Venice I 'm two thousand miles away;
> Yet to my mind are summoned every day
> Her speech, the merry habits of her folk,
> And her sweet name, fond memories to evoke.

XV

DRAMATIC WORK IN FRANCE

WHEN he arrived in Paris, to fulfil his engagement with *Les Comédiens du roi de la troupe italienne,* Goldoni found the actors who had enticed him thither in sore need of comedies that would renew the lustre of their dimming fame. Since the reign of Henri III, when the Gelosi were summoned to Paris by *le roi des mignons,* Italian players had trodden the boards of the capital, first as transient tenants of the Hôtel du Petit Bourbon, the playhouse where in 1658 Molière made his successful bow to the general public of his native city; and then as permanent occupants of the Hôtel de Bourgogne, oldest of French theatres. In the heyday of their success many famous players had been enrolled in their ranks. Tiberio Fiorelli, the Scaramouche, who was Molière's reputed teacher in the art of mimicry; Domenico Locatelli, Francesco and Luisa Gabrielli, and Angelo Costantino, called Mezzettino, had each in turn added brilliance to the Comédie Italienne.

After the union, in 1680, of the players of the Hôtel de Bourgogne and those of the Théâtre Guénégaud—the remnants of Molière's company—to form the Comédie Française, the Italians played

at the Hôtel de Bourgogne until their temerity in placing upon their stage a satire upon Madame de Maintenon caused the doors of their playhouse to be sealed in 1697 by royal order. Soon after reopening the Hôtel de Bourgogne in 1716, by consent of the Regent, they obtained the title of *comédiens italiens ordinaires du Roi* and an annual subsidy of 15,000 livres; yet they sought in vain to regain the popularity they had once enjoyed. By substituting written comedies, and even tragedies, for the farces of the Improvised Comedy, Luigi Riccoboni, known as Lelio, a man of letters as well as an actor of ability, tried to elevate the character of the plays performed at the Comédie Italienne, a task in which he was ably seconded by the talents of Rosa Giovanna Balletti-Benozzi, known on the stage as Sylvia. But the public of Paris, unacquainted with the Italian language, would not tolerate this innovation; hence the Italian actors were forced to resort to scenarî Frenchified to suit the Parisian taste.

In vain did Arlecchino and Brighella extemporize their *lazzi,* while Lelio and Sylvia drew love phrases from the *zibaldone.* Satiated with Italian buffoonery, the Parisian public gave its patronage to French comedy and opéra bouffe, or to the *parades* and farces of the *théâtres forains.* Finding themselves in these sore straits, the Italians produced French comedies by Regnard, Le Sage, Marivaux, and lesser lights, and even imported American red men to dance in war-paint and feathers upon their cosmo-

politan stage. When these attractions failed to draw, they placed new Corinthian columns in the Hôtel de Bourgogne and repainted the boxes, and, as a last resort, invited to Paris their Venetian compatriot, Goldoni, whose scenario, entitled *Harlequin's Son Lost and Found (Il Figlio d'Arlecchino perduto e ritrovato)* had four years previously (1758) been presented with considerable success upon their stage.

At the Hôtel de Bourgogne Goldoni found a company skilled in improvisation, but inexperienced in performing written comedy. It was a profit-sharing company, moreover, and therefore ill disciplined, for it had no manager, and the royal *intendant des menus plaisirs* gave it only perfunctory supervision. Collalto, the pantaloon, an actor formerly in Medebac's troupe, for whom he had written *The Merchants* many years before, was, as Goldoni avers, "one of the best actors in Italy"; yet neither he nor Carlo Bertinazzi, the harlequin affectionately known as Carlino, could deliver written lines effectively. The voice of beautiful Camilla Veronese, the *servetta,* was "the cry of nature"; Zanuzzi, the *primo amoroso,* was "well considered in Italy"; yet they, as well as their inferior comrades, such as Madame Savi, the leading lady, who was "without talent," were schooled only in the ancient art of extemporizing.

Although Zanuzzi and Madame Savi went to Villejuif to meet him; although in Paris he was wined and dined by the actors he had come to serve, Goldoni, the astute craftsman, saw quickly that the

dramatic path he had come to tread was strewn with thorns instead of flowers. The Opéra Comique had recently been closed and its repertory added to the Comédie Italienne, and, finding the theatre filled on the opera nights and empty when Italian comedies were given, he attributed this disparity to the fact that his compatriots "gave only time-worn pieces" of the sort "he had reformed in Italy." Resolving to present only "characters, progress, deportment, style," he met with the opposition of the mask actors, who "wishing to shine without taking the trouble to study," demanded scenarî in the familiar style of the Improvised Comedy.

Loath to turn backward in his art, the new-comer asked four months' time in which to study Parisian conditions, and during this respite from labour he frequented the playhouses of Paris, trying meanwhile to learn the dramatic taste of the public. When the time for his Parisian début arrived, he found the Italian players only partially in accord with his ideals, the mask actors being still persistent in their wish to extemporize their lines. At a meeting of the company he was able to carry the day by showing "the indecorum of introducing an author without dialogue." Although pleased with this triumph, he foresaw the difficulty of writing for actors unskilled in committing their lines to memory; therefore he resolved to lead them gradually toward the reforms he had accomplished in Italy. With this end in view he composed a comedy, calling, as he says, "for

slight precision in execution," entitled *Paternal Love (L'Amore paterno),* a play which failed so lamentably that it was withdrawn after the fourth performance. Favart, however, saw even in its least important scenes "qualities that revealed the Molière of Italy," and stood ready "to uphold the reputation of our Venetian lawyer," whom he regarded "as the advocate of Thalia and good taste." Grimm, on the contrary, thought it "a monstrous mixture of pathos and buffoonery," a verdict more in accord with that of both the public of its day and of posterity.

Paternal Love is a stereotyped, though nimble, comedy, with virtuous characters—virtue being then the fashion, at least upon the stage—and it contains complimentary references to Goldoni's French public. In the dramatic path of this middle-aged foreigner there were, however, two insurmountable obstacles: to wit, the incompetence in written comedy of actors trained in the school of improvisation, and the inability of the public, particularly of its feminine portion, to understand Italian. The women would not attend the Comédie Italienne, and, as Goldoni sententiously remarks, "when a theatre lacks women, the men are scarce also."[1] Therefore the actors began to demand scenarî of their dramatist, in which Arlecchino and Scappino might extemporize their lines in French as was their wont.[2] Goldoni's own words shall tell of his discomfiture:

[1] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, April 18, 1763.
[2] Letter to Agostino Paradisi, March 28, 1763.

I wished to depart immediately, yet how could I leave Paris which had enthralled me? I had an engagement for two years; I was tempted to remain. The majority of the Italian comedians demanded only scenarî, the public was accustomed to them; the court suffered them; why should I have refused to conform? Come, I said, let us construct scenarî if they wish them. Any sacrifice seemed sweet, any trouble endurable for the pleasure of remaining two years in Paris. It cannot be said, however, that I permitted amusements to interfere with the fulfilment of my duty; I gave during the period of those two years twenty-four [*sic*] plays, the titles and the success or failure of which may be found in *L'Almanach des spectacles*. Eight of these plays remain upon the stage, and they have cost me more trouble than if I had written them out in entirety. I could only please by means of interesting situations, full of humours artfully prepared and safe from the actors' whims. I succeeded better than I imagined; yet, whatever the success of my plays, I seldom went to see them. I liked good comedy and I went to the Théâtre Français to be amused and to be instructed.

For thirty years he had striven to reform the taste of the Italian public by leading it away from vulgar humour "artfully prepared" toward "progress, deportment, and style"; vainly had he represented mankind by characters true to nature; Carlo Gozzi with his fantastic fairy-tales had driven him into exile, and now he was forced by the Parisian public to write the very sort of play he had sought to banish from the stage of his native land. Beginning again in France at the age of fifty-five the reform he had striven so resolutely to accomplish in his native land, he fought without the ardour of youth, and therefore submitted more readily to the exigencies of the stage. Being written solely to obtain a livelihood, it is not

surprising that in the plays and scenarî he wrought for the Italian comedians during the two years of his engagement with them his genius as a painter of nature is seldom manifest. He was amazingly prolific, however, during his first years in France, and in addition to the plays and scenarî he wrote for the Comédie Italienne and the San Luca theatre, he penned a goodly number of libretti for the lyrical stages of Venice, Lisbon, Vienna, and London. Yet his work for the Comédie Italienne was far from satisfactory either from the point of view of receipts or of critical favour.

Only in the trilogy dealing with Arlecchino's love for Camilla did he win the absolute approval of the French critics. Of *Harlequin and Camilla's Love (Gli Amori di Arlecchino e di Camilla)* the first play of this series, Grimm[3] says that "the construction and plot are simple, yet full of resource and imagination." Bachaumont, after praising its "true beauties," adds that its "very numerous incidents are all connected, and arise naturally from one another," while "pathos and comedy are so thoroughly welded in this play as to leave no incongruity."[4] *Harlequin's Jealousy (La Gelosia di Arlecchino)* and *Camilla's Tribulations* (*Le Inquietudini di Camilla*) complete this trilogy, the last play of which Grimm calls a "masterpiece of naturalism, truth, imagination, and subtlety"; yet being mere scenarî, they have

[3] *Correspondance littéraire.*

[4] *Mémoires secrets,* quoted by Rabany.

not been handed down to us in their original form.

A year or so after their production, however, Goldoni, instigated, as has been already pointed out, by a French woman of "wit, intelligence, and taste," rewrote and reconstructed them for the Venetian stage. Since in the company that was to play them, there was "no harlequin equal to Carlino or Sacchi," he "dignified the subject," he says, by replacing Arlecchino and the servetta with middle-class characters, and called the three plays: *Zelinda and Lindoro's Love (Gli Amori di Zelinda e Lindoro), Lindoro's Jealousy (La Gelosia di Lindoro),* and *Zelinda's Tribulations (Le Inquietudini di Zelinda).* "They did not have," he adds, "a startling success in Venice, but they were well enough received by an enlightened public more content with the composition than the execution."

As the plays composing the love trilogy of Zelinda and Lindoro are suggestive, both in action and psychology, of French contemporary comedy, the praise bestowed by Grimm and Bachaumont upon the three scenarî from which they are taken seems due to Goldoni's success in pleasing the Parisian taste of his day, rather than to any marked display of his genius as a naturalist. Being constructed in accordance with the formula that a play to be successful should unite, disunite, and reunite a pair of lovers, they are three rather obvious solutions of this dramatic problem.

Though both are honourably born above their stations, Zelinda is a housemaid and Lindoro a private secretary in a household where Zelinda is loved unavailingly by the master, his son, and his butler. Falling in love with each other, and becoming objects of the jealousy of both master and mistress, Zelinda and Lindoro are discharged. Employed by a "respectable" actress named Barbara, "decorum" causes them to be dismissed again when their mutual love is discovered; whereupon, after many lachrymose adventures, they are united in honest wedlock; this being in brief the story of their love. In the play concerning Lindoro's jealousy, a love-letter written to Barbara, the actress, is entrusted to Zelinda. Discovering it in her possession, Lindoro believes it to have been written to her, and as she refuses to betray her trust, his jealousy causes him to track her to Barbara's house, only to learn that her visit there is not for clandestine love, but to prevent her master's son from contracting a misalliance with an actress. In the play about her tribulations, Zelinda, wishing to make the most of Lindoro's jealousy, seeks to keep it alive in order that his love may not smoulder; Lindoro striving meanwhile to prevent his jealousy from tormenting her. Finding him cured of his suspicions, and thinking that his love for her is dead, Zelinda becomes jealous in turn. Having suffered mutually, both are prepared, as Charles Dejob points out, "to proceed through their

tears, not toward a rupture, but toward definite peace, founded henceforth upon an unalterable confidence in each other." [5]

The lachrymose story of Zelinda and Lindoro's love, jealousy, and tribulations emulates the French comedy of Goldoni's day, yet does scant justice to his genius. Though simple in construction and spirited in action, though perhaps psychologically correct in their delineation of the tender passion, the plays of this trilogy lack both characterization and atmosphere, the essential elements that make Goldoni the "painter of nature" Voltaire declared him to be.

Alone among the *dramatis personæ,* Barbara is not a lay figure whereon to display the deftly woven fabric of the story; yet even she is thematically drawn to expound the decency of Italian actresses, a tenet the reader hesitates to accept in view of the author's frequently requited passion for soubrettes. Yet it must be confessed that he pays due tribute to the virtue of actresses when he says: "I have known in this profession very excellent people of both sexes, whose virtue would put to shame persons of the most retired life." [6] Barbara, living virtuously in the midst of temptation in order that she may "prove worthy the hand of some honest man who will rescue her from her base calling" and "bathing with her tears the pittance she derives from an arduous and perilous profession," although she is so prudish as

[5] Op. cit.

[6] Dedication to the Marquis Scipione Maffei of *Il Moliere.*

to drive two worthy servants from her house for fear their mutual love will discredit her, is instructive, nevertheless, because of the side-light she sheds upon her author's dramatic morals.

Indeed, Goldoni's comedies are amazingly free from libertinage. In *The Good Wife* two women of questionable virtue make merry with a rich young gentleman; in *The Bankruptcy* an opera singer ruins both a nobleman and a merchant; in *The Mistress of the Inn* two gay actresses appear, though they do not wanton; in *The Obedient Daughter* Brighella thrives upon the munificence of his daughter's admirers; in *The Man of the World* Truffaldino exploits his sister's charms; in *The Jovial Men* an opera singer courts married men; and in *The Smyrna Manager* second-rate songstresses with cracked voices pluck aged philanderers; yet all these more or less shady ladies are but minor characters who serve to point a moral rather than to adorn a tale, it being their author's avowed intention to decry vice, not to sanction it. Moreover, unless a scene between an actress and a stage director in *The Comic Theatre* be deemed of questionable morality,[7] his dialogue is untainted by the suggestiveness that so impairs the ethical tone of the modern European stage.

Although French and Italian morals throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were at a far lower ebb than they are at present, the tone of

[7] Act 1, Scene 5.

French and Italian comedy rose to a higher level then than it has since attained in either land, a triumph of artistic decency due in France to Molière and in Italy to Goldoni, the plays of both these masters being, in view of the morals of their respective ages, singularly free from sensual situations, and even from innuendo. True, Molière occasionally introduced coarse language in his plays; yet he eschewed licentious situations, such as are to be found in Menander, in Plautus, and even in Shakespeare. Goldoni, too, is open to the charge of having presented in *The House Party* a triangle of domestic infelicity similar in outline to the conventional framework of the plays of modern Europe; yet he has so tempered his situations that the apical angle describing his story of marital incompatibility, being neither viciously obtuse nor insinuatingly acute, may justly be termed right. Pertinent to the commendable freedom from indecency of both Molière and Goldoni is this view of a modern Frenchman:

> Many men of letters of our own day believe that art has nothing to gain from being too expressly concerned with morality. It is singular to state, however, that all creative ages thought exactly the contrary; not only the frigid or inflexible men of the great centuries, but the men of imagination as well, believing that the beautiful and the good are inseparable.[8]

To return from this ethical wandering to Goldoni's dramatic work in France, it is interesting to note that the worthy plays he wrote during his engage-

[8] Charles Dejob: op. cit.

ment at the Comédie Italienne did not achieve immediate success. First of these in point of chronology is *The Fan (Il Ventaglio),* a play that enjoys the distinction of having been performed in English more frequently—in the United States at least—than any of Goldoni's comedies,[9] a success due more to deft dramaturgy than to the naturalistic qualities in which its author excels. Skilful in construction, vivacious in dialogue, this adroitly woven play presents Goldoni's aptitude as a dramatic craftsman rather than his genius as a painter of life. Il Conte di Rocca Marina, its most entertaining character, only iterates the droll qualities that make the Marchese di Forlipopoli and Don Marzio such engaging studies of decayed gentility; moreover, no faithful portraits, such as those of Lunardo and his boorish cronies, adorn it, while one searches it in vain for such true pictures of street life as are to be found in *The Chioggian Brawls,* or for such "lacerations of the human heart" as are portrayed in the love scenes of this play.

The Fan is a comedy with many short, sparkling

[9] In 1898 *Il Ventaglio,* translated by Henry B. Fuller, was performed in the Grand Opera House, Chicago, by the pupils of Miss Anna Morgan; and in the following year the inferior translation edited by Helen Zimmern was presented by a dramatic school in New York City. In 1909 Mr. Fuller's translation was again played in Chicago by students of the University of Chicago; in 1910-1911 *The Yale University Dramatic Association* presented Professor Kenneth McKenzie's translation of *Il Ventaglio* in Bridgeport, Conn., Albany, N. Y., Buffalo, N. Y., Erie, Penn., Pittsburgh, Penn., Washington, D. C., Brooklyn, N. Y., New York, N. Y., New Haven, Conn., Northampton, Mass., and Hartford, Conn. In 1912 a translation by Professor Stark Young was played by The Curtain Club of the University of Texas.

scenes, enhanced by continuous action and movement, in which, to quote its author, "action plays a more important part than words." The scene is a village street, the characters drawn from the innkeepers, apothecaries, shoemakers, milliners, *petite noblesse,* and peasantry of Goldoni's native land; yet they are sketches, rather than portraits such as he painted in *The Boors* and *The Chioggian Brawls.* A fan falls from a window, and from this incident, to quote Ernesto Masi, "Goldoni twists and untwists with much naturalness one of the most complicated of comic intrigues." [10] This plot, wherein the innocent falling of a woman's fan into the hands of the wrong girl sets a whole village agog with scandal and jealousy, is too complicated to detail here. As Signor Masi points out, "Goldoni's inspiration came evidently from the Improvised Comedy, here placed at the service of the most studied and refined art of comedy."

It is easy to agree with Professor Kenneth McKenzie, one of the able translators of *The Fan,* when he says that the Venetian dramatist's "skill in technical construction is shown in this play by the continuous series of amazing situations." It is not, however, a play by which to judge of its author's genius, it being the last word of the Italian comedy of intrigue, but not the truest word of Goldoni the naturalist.[11]

[10] *Scelta di commedie di Carlo Goldoni.*

[11] The following criticism from the *Hartford Courant* of the per-

Yet to call this play the last word of the comedy of intrigue is unjust, perhaps, to *The Marriage by Competition (Il Matrimonio per concorso),* a comedy Goldoni sent to Vendramin only a few months after the first Parisian performance of *The Fan,* which shares with it the honour of displaying Goldoni's dexterity in stagecraft at its best, a dexterity in which he is rivalled only by such master-builders of plays as Scribe and Sardou. Indeed it would be difficult to find a more deftly woven plot than that of *The Marriage by Competition,* yet, like *The Fan,* this play lacks a central character of strength, the primal element of great comedy. Moreover, it is artificial in tone, no clear note of nature being sounded in this sprightly comedy of equivocation.

Pandolfo, an Italian merchant of ignoble antecedents, arrives with his daughter Lisetta at an inn in Paris, kept by Filippo, an Italian *locandiere,* with whom Lisetta falls in love. Pandolfo, however, having once been a servant, will brook no base innkeeper for a son-in-law. With a view to making a desirable match, he inserts the following advertisement in a newspaper:

formance of this play by the Yale Dramatic Association, shows the effectiveness of Goldoni's stagecraft in our own day:

"*The Fan,* as presented Saturday evening, is a lively piece, and serves well the purpose of the student actors who played it. There is much action, there is abundance of crisp dialogue, there is good character drawing. The play is one of the manners of the time, in great measure, and as such it is interesting, but it is also possessed of a plot of humorous value, and, despite the age of the work, the action seems no more old-fashioned than in the comparatively modern *London Assurance* (given by the Yale boys here a year ago)—and the language is not half so stilted and uninteresting.

Notice to the Public:

A foreigner of Italian birth has arrived in this city, a merchant by calling, of moderate fortune and original ideas. He has a daughter to marry, of youthful age, passable beauty, and admirable grace, medium height, chestnut hair, fair complexion, black eyes, smiling mouth, active mind, uncommon talent, and the best heart in the world. The father will dower her in proportion as the candidate is acceptable to him, or to his daughter. Both are stopping at the Eagle Inn. There those who wish to marry her may address themselves, whereupon they will be admitted to the competition.

At the time this advertisement appears, Anselmo, an honourable Italian merchant, arrives at Filippo's inn with his daughter Doralice. Here Alberto, a young Italian of means, attracted by the curious method Pandolfo has chosen to dispose of his daughter, also comes, in order to catch a glimpse of the lass whose hand has been offered in competition. Meeting Doralice, he falls in love with her, while believing her to be the Italian merchant's daughter advertised in the paper. Filippo, the innkeeper, and Lisetta, who is no party to her father's plan to marry her to the highest bidder, abet this case of mistaken identity to further their own love. Without detailing the intricacies of this skilful plot, it may be said an artful story of mistaken identity is evolved, so spirited that it only awaits the modernizing touches of a commercial play-builder and a popular composer, to become a musical comedy of the sort in which audiences of the present day delight.

The light that *The Marriage by Competition*

sheds upon the French customs of its day gives it an added interest, Goldoni having written it to be performed before his fellow-countrymen, instead of upon the Parisian stage. In order that the Venetians might learn how the Parisians differed from themselves, he gives curious details of Parisian life, such as the habits of cabmen, the comparative value of monies, the freedom enjoyed by French women, the advantages of *la petite poste,* and other Parisian customs that had pleased him, while in the following passage he explains why his own comedies did not succeed so well in Paris as in his native land:

MADAME FONTENE.

I say, what do you find that is pleasing in the Italian comedy?

MONSIEUR LA ROSE.

I enjoy it because I understand it. You cannot appreciate it because you don't understand it. That is why an Italian author in Paris, writing in his own language, will never see his theatre filled. The women make the success of plays. The women don't understand; the women do not go; the men pay court to the fair sex, hence there remain for the Italians only a few lovers of their language, a few people attracted by chance, a few authors to speak well of them, and a few critics to speak ill of them.

A similar psychology of the theatrical public is presented by Goldoni in his memoirs, when in speaking of *The Jovial Women* he says: "I paid court to the women of my country, but at the same time I worked for my own interest, since in order to please the public you must commence by flattering the ladies"; an exposition of the part borne by women

in ensuring the success of a play that is no less true of the present day.

Years of practical experience had taught him the futility of opposing the popular taste. He had striven manfully to reform the Italian stage; a fickle public, charmed by Carlo Gozzi's fairy-tales, had forced him to seek employment in a foreign land. There he served his employers faithfully, studying Parisian conditions, and supplying the stage of the Comédie Italienne with the kind of plays the public demanded. Forced by the taste of the day to return to the methods of the Improvised Comedy he had fought so resolutely to banish from his native land, he was constrained at the age of fifty-five to retrace the steps he had so laboriously taken toward the goal of his ambitions. Backward he picked his way, like some valiant mountaineer, who, baffled by the elements, retires to the valley to await a more propitious time for scaling the highest peak. Skilled in his calling, knowing the caprices of the public, he retired from the heights of naturalistic comedy to the level of Improvised Comedy, and from its elements he contrived such plays as *The Fan* and *The Marriage by Competition,* the final word of that comedy, as well as of play construction, no modern dramatist having more skilfully woven theatric materials into nimble plays than has Goldoni in these two deft pieces. Still versatile, adroit, and capable, this artist who had painted mankind truly, became a playwright in the literal sense. An artificer by force of

circumstances, the artist in him lay dormant while he plied his trade for the Comédie Italienne, even *The Fan* and *The Marriage by Competition* being merely intricate scaffolds artfully built by a master-craftsman. To become pure comedy they need to be walled solidly with the enduring truth to nature that adorns the Venetian comedies of Goldoni the artist. Meanwhile Goldoni, the playwright, wrought plays at the behest of his employers, but "seldom went to see them" because the artist in him "liked good comedy."

Indeed so thoroughly had his artistic spirit been broken by the scorn of his countrymen that he even emulated Carlo Gozzi, by sending to Venice for performance there, *The Good Genius and The Bad Genius (Il Genio buono e il genio cattivo),* an extravaganza, as we should call it to-day, in which he meets Gozzi on his own ground. An allegorical harlequinade, a jumble of fantastic scenes, in which the chief characters fly to Paris, London, and Tripoli, then back to the Italian countryside whence they came, this play, with its ballets and transformations, is designed to please the eye, not the intellect. In the temptation of Arlecchino and his wife Camilla by the genius of evil, and their salvation by the genius of goodness, it tells a moral story, it is true; yet it is a story as old as that of Adam's fall, and very tritely told in a way quite unworthy its author, whose artistic sense arose in protest; since he says that "to flatter the bad taste of a country where I had striven

to establish good taste, pricked my conscience."

When his engagement with the Comédie Italienne ended, and he became Italian tutor to Madame Adélaïde, Goldoni forgot his theatrical trials amid court gaieties and court intrigues, but did not cease to love his art. For the Comédie Italienne he had forsworn his ideals, building at the request of its actors theatric plays, constructed along popular lines—scenarî and comedies of intrigue, in which the plot was dominant, but not a single comedy of character. Seven years after his engagement with the Italian players had ended, he wrote, not in his own tongue, but in that of his adopted country, *The Beneficent Bear (Le Bourru bienfaisant),* a true comedy of character, ranking in his dramatic work next to those plays in the Venetian dialect that "do him the greatest honour."

To triumph on the boards of the Comédie Française had been his dream. "The best of my plays is not worth the worst of Molière's," he exclaimed, when he first saw *The Misanthrope* performed; yet when on November 4th, 1771, he made his début at the House of Molière, it was with a comedy not unworthy the master. If *The Beneficent Bear* does not rise to the sublimity of *The Misanthrope,* it is certainly better than the worst of Molière's plays; moreover, it was written in French by a foreigner who came to France in middle life, with so poor a knowledge of the language that he went without his dinner one day while waiting for Madame Adélaïde,

because she had said when leaving him, *"à tantôt"*—spoken in the sense of *at another time*—which he interpreted by the Italian expression *tantosto,* meaning *immediately.* When *The Beneficent Bear* was staged, several years had elapsed since its author had stood hungry in a royal antechamber; meanwhile he had mastered the French tongue to an astounding degree of perfection when his age is considered, he being sixty-four at the time when he had his hearing at the Comédie Française. "I wished to prove to those who did not know Italian," he says in one of the ingenuous outbursts of his memoirs, "that I occupied a place among dramatic authors; and I decided that I must either succeed or not undertake it." Yet to invade the realm of Molière was decidedly an act of temerity on the part of this native of Italy.

Though not the equal of Molière's masterpieces, nor of Goldoni's best Venetian comedies, *The Beneficent Bear* is certainly worthy an eminent place upon the French stage of its day. In characterization, the prime element of dramatic greatness, it surpasses the feminine comedies of Marivaux, while beside Beaumarchais's inimitable Figaro, its titular character, Géronte, may stand without being dwarfed entirely. Although his bearish utterances present no such arraignment of a rotten aristocracy as nimble-witted Figaro's racy speeches, Géronte is, nevertheless, a thoroughly natural human being, brusque, overbearing, irascible, yet benevolent as the name of the play implies; in a word, a cantankerous old bachelor with

a kindly heart, sketched to the life—a character new, as his author declares, to the stage, though not to real life, and still lusty, while Marivaudage languishes. Being a less dramatic though not a less human type than Harpagon, Goldoni's kindly bear stands on a step below Molière's miser.

Géronte is imperious because he is rich and used to being obeyed; yet he loves his niece Angélique and his nephew Dalancour, even though he conceives the control of their destinies to be his divine right. The nephew is an uxorious young weakling, who, through love for his extravagant, frivolous, yet devoted wife, wastes his patrimony to provide her with stylish clothes and equipages. He even tampers with his sister's dowry, and to recoup his pilfering, resorts to unfortunate speculation. When the curtain rises, he is a ruined man, whose sole hope lies in his uncle. Living unostentatiously himself, attended by a housekeeper and a single man-servant, Géronte takes this old-fashioned view of his nephew's extravagance:

> I have nothing to do with his embarrassments nor his wife's follies. His property is his own; if he squanders it, if he ruins himself, so much the worse for him. But in the case of my niece, I am the head of the family, I am the master; it is my duty to provide for her.

In order to conceal his misappropriation of her dowry, Dalancour resolves to confine his sister in a convent; yet she, like most young ladies in old comedy, has a secret love-affair with a young spark named

Valère. Being told of the threat to immure her, Géronte displays both his temper and his love for her, in a delightful scene in which he so cows Angélique with his gruffness, while vowing he will balk his nephew's designs by finding her a husband, that she dare not confess her love for Valère. No more dare her brother Dalancour confess his debts to his wife; but to Dorval, his uncle's phlegmatic friend, he confides the uncongenial task of obtaining for him the beneficent bear's mercy, which disinterested act Dorval undertakes to accomplish.

Géronte's imperious brusqueness and the fear in which Dorval holds him are made apparent when, over a game of chess, Dorval attempts to intercede for the Bear's scapegrace nephew and his lovelorn niece, only to be browbeaten into accepting the latter's hand himself, in spite of the disparity in their years and the fact that she already loves another. Dorval does not, of course, marry Angélique, nor is her brother imprisoned for debt, the goddess to step from the machine being Madame Dalancour, the latter's extravagant wife.

When the lovers' matters are at sixes and sevens, and the bear at odds with every one, yet indulgent to all—even to the nephew he has bullied so unmercifully—Madame Dalancour throws herself upon his generosity, pleading her inexperience and youth as her only excuse for her blindness to the true state of her husband's finances. If only he will forgive his nephew, she promises Géronte to withdraw for

ever from his sight. Finding him obdurate, she faints, a feminine subterfuge that conquers the tender-hearted bear; so when he has aroused her with splashes of eau-de-Cologne in her pretty face, he forgives her.

Interceded with on behalf of his niece and her lover, he exclaims: "Plague take my disposition! I can't keep angry as long as I want to. I could box my own ears!" Nephew, niece, friend, and housekeeper implore anew for the lovers. "Be silent!" he cries. "Let me alone! May the devil take you all! Let him marry her!"

"Without a dowry?" asks his housekeeper.

"Without a dowry!" he storms. "I marry my niece without a dowry! Am I not able to give her a dowry?" Whereupon he makes good the dowry Angélique's brother has squandered, adding a hundred thousand livres on his own behalf.

A beneficent bear indeed—a kindly old man who has lived alone for so many years that the desire to be obeyed has become a habit rather than a trait. He blusters and loves in the same breath, raises his stick and opens his purse at the same moment—yet he has a ring in his nose, and may be led by any one not afraid of him. His servant Picard has the trick of wheedling him. Witness the scene when Picard enters after Géronte has called.

PICARD

Here, sir.

GÉRONTE

You rascal! Why don't you answer?

PICARD

Pardon me, sir, here I am.

GÉRONTE

Disgraceful! I called ten times.

PICARD

I am sorry, but—

GÉRONTE

Ten times! It's scandalous.

PICARD

(*Aside and angry*) He's in a fury now.

GÉRONTE

Have you seen Dorval?

PICARD

Yes, sir.

GÉRONTE

Where is he?

PICARD

He's gone, sir.

GÉRONTE

How did he go?

PICARD

(*Roughly*) He went as other people go.

GÉRONTE

Insolent rogue! Do you dare answer your master in this way? (*He raises his cane.*)

PICARD

(*Very angrily*) Give me my discharge, sir.

GÉRONTE

Your discharge—worthless fellow! (*He strikes him. . Picard falls between the chair and the table. Géronte runs to his assistance and helps him up.*)

PICARD

Oh! (*He leans on the chair and shows he is hurt.*)

GÉRONTE

Are you hurt? Are you hurt?

PICARD

Very much hurt; you have crippled me

GÉRONTE

Oh, I am so sorry! Can you walk?

PICARD

(*Still angry*) I believe so, sir. (*He tries, and walks badly.*)

GÉRONTE

(*Sharply*) Go on.

PICARD

(*Mortified*) Do you drive me away, sir?

GÉRONTE

(*Warmly*) No. Go to your wife's house and be taken care of. (*Pulls out his purse and offers him money.*) Take this to get cured.

PICARD

(*Aside, with tenderness*) What a master!

GÉRONTE

Take it. (*Giving him money.*)

PICARD

No, sir, I hope it will be nothing.

GÉRONTE

Take it, I tell you.

PICARD

(*Still refusing it*) Sir—

GÉRONTE

(*Very warmly*) What! you refuse my money? Do you refuse it from spite, or pride, or hatred? Do you believe I did it on purpose? Take this money. Take it. Come, don't make me furious.

PICARD

Don't get angry, sir. I thank you for all your kindness. (*Takes the money.*)

GÉRONTE

Go quickly.

PICARD

Yes, sir. (*Walks badly.*)

GÉRONTE

Go slowly.

PICARD

Yes, sir.

GÉRONTE

Wait, wait; take my cane.

PICARD

Sir—

GÉRONTE

Take it, I tell you! I wish you to.

PICARD

(*Takes the cane.*) What kindness.[12]

The plot of *The Beneficent Bear* is obvious, the dialogue without brilliant flashes of wit, but the characterization is true, the comedy in the best spirit of the art—a picture of life lightly but sincerely painted, a story of a good but gruff man's triumph over himself, told in a way that bears no kinship with the sorrow of tragedy or the hilarity of farce. To maintain that it was acclaimed a masterpiece when produced at the Comédie Française, would be idle. The French critics were too accustomed to the delicate and subtle phrasing of Marivaux and the supple vivacity of Regnard, to see in Goldoni's

[12] Act II, Scene 21. The reader who recalls the consummate art with which Signor Novelli plays the rôle of Géronte, the tender human manner in which the above scene between master and man is rendered by him, already knows the truth and naturalism of this character.

naturalism aught but an Italian *canevas* with written words.

"The style is extremely natural," said Bachaumont, "and that is one of the author's qualities; but the too elevated fashion which our modern writers of comedy have attained makes it appear trivial and dull to many amateurs." Madame d'Epinay, holding the pen of her friend Grimm, found it "strongly conceived but feebly executed," and saw in it the work of a man "more accustomed to the making of *canevas* than the detailing of plays." Collé considered it "bad and tiresome," and actually refused to the protagonist "the merit of novelty." [13] Though many of the critics were captious, the public was unstinting in its applause. Ever candid in relating the public's approval or non-approval of his work, Goldoni thus tells in no uncertain tone of his triumph on that night when he, a foreigner, made his début in the House of Molière.

During the first performance of my comedy, I had hidden myself, as I had always done in Italy, behind the back-drop. I saw nothing, but I heard my actors and the applause of the public. During the entire performance I walked back and forth, hastening my steps during the lively situations, or lagging in the moments of interest and passion, content with my actors and echoing the applause of the public. When the piece was finished, I heard the clapping of hands, and cries which did not stop. M. Dauberval came. It was he who was to take me to Fontainebleau. I thought he was looking for me because it was time to start. Not at all. "Come, monsieur," he said, "you must show yourself."

[13] Bachaumont: *Mémoires secrets;* Grimm: *Correspondance;* Collé: *Journal historique.*

"Show myself to whom?" "To the public which demands you." "No, my friend. Let us leave quickly. I could not stand it." Then M. Lekain and M. Brizard took me by the arm and led me to the stage.

I had seen authors courageously endure a similar ceremony, but I was not accustomed to it, authors not appearing on the stage in Italy to be complimented. I did not conceive how a man could tacitly say to the audience, "Gentlemen, here I am; now applaud me!" After having endured for a few seconds the most singular and most annoying of positions, I retired, going through the foyer to gain the carriage that awaited me. I met many people who were looking for me, but I recognized no one. Descending with my guide, I entered the carriage, where my wife and nephew had already seated themselves. The success of my play made them weep with joy, and the story of my apparition on the stage made them shout with laughter.

I was tired, I wanted to rest, I had need of sleep, my heart was contented, my mind at rest. In my bed I should have passed a happy night, but, in a carriage, I could only shut my eyes and be awakened each moment by the jolting. Finally, dozing, talking, yawning, I reached Fontainebleau. I slept, I dined, I took a walk; and then I saw my piece played at the château, again from behind the back-drop.

Although presented to Louis XV, after this command performance at Fontainebleau, and complimented by his majesty and all the royal family, Goldoni's French path was not entirely without thorns. Upon his return to Paris, he was initiated into the pains of a cabal, for, when his play was again performed at the Comédie Française, the pit was filled with enemies to "boo" it. "Why did this not happen at the first performance?" Goldoni asked Feuilli, the actor playing Picard, the valet. "The jealous ones did not fear you then," Feuilli answered. "They

pooh-poohed the notion of a foreigner writing a play in French; so the cabal was not ready. But you have nothing to dread," he added; "the nail has been hit on the head; your success is assured." [14]

In no country does patriotism play so important a rôle as in France; therefore this placing of French laurels on a foreign brow was unprecedented. Goldoni's success was phenomenal from every point of view: his age; his temerity. And his art is so much freer and more unpolished than the French art of that day that the marvel is a cabal was not formed spontaneously on the first night to hiss this foreigner's work off the stage. It is but another evidence that critics and their rules do not govern dramatic success, and that audiences, the world over, seldom fail in appreciating a true picture of human nature, no matter by whom it is painted.

"Nobody spoke ill of *The Beneficent Bear*," says Goldoni (a stretching of the truth in view of Collé's words); "yet some people thought it was one of my Italian plays, others that I wrote it here in Italian, then translated it into French. Not only did I com-

[14] *Le Bourru bienfaisant* was played at Chantilly with the Prince de Condé in the title rôle; at the Comédie Française it had a fair, but not a long run, for the period. After the failure of *L'Avare fastueux*, and between July 27, 1778, and June 26, 1780, it was given eight times, and perhaps oftener (see Annexe V, Rabany, op. cit.). In 1784 a revival was announced (see Annexe VI, ibid.), but probably not made, owing to the popularity of *Le Mariage de Figaro* by Beaumarchais. In 1792 Goldoni sold his author's rights during his lifetime to the Comédie Française, in whose repertory the comedy had its place until 1849. In 1878 that institution gave a special performance of it as a specimen of Italian dramaturgy.

pose it in French," he continues, "but I thought in the French way when I imagined it. In its sentiments, its imagery, its morals, and its style, it bears the imprint of its origin." A true statement; since except for the simplicity of the unpolished dialogue, and the humanly natural gruffness of Géronte the bear, it might have been the work of a contemporary Frenchman, so thoroughly French is it in other respects.[15]

When next Goldoni braved a French audience with a play in its language, he did not again experience the thrill of being led upon the stage "amid hand clappings and cries that did not stop." On the contrary, the performance finished, as he says, "without any sign of approbation or disapproval." The play that created this atmosphere of coldness was entitled *The Ostentatious Miser* (*L'Avare fastueux*), a five-act comedy played at Fontainebleau for one performance only by the actors of the Comédie Française, on November 14th, 1776, when its venturesome author was sixty-nine years of age. Five years had elapsed since the successful production of *The Beneficent Bear;* during that period Goldoni had lived upon his royal pension. "I said that I wished to repose upon my laurels," he declares in his ever candid memoirs, "but it was the fear of not succeeding a

[15] In *La Casa nova,* the play in which the Bear had already been sketched, and from which a portion of the plot was taken, Goldoni is thoroughly Venetian. Karl Mantzius (op. cit., Vol. II) calls attention to the rumor that Carlo Bertinazzi, a popular actor in Paris, about whom Goldoni speaks highly in his memoirs, was the model of *Le Bourru bienfaisant.*

second time so well as the first which prevented me from acceding to the desires of my friends and of satisfying myself. At last I surrendered to the solicitations of others, as well as to my own self-conceit."

If Harpagon had not come into the world a century before him, Count de Chateaudor, the pompous miser, who puts a ball of paper into his pocket every time a bottle is opened at his table and starves his guests' horses as well as his own, might have passed for quite an original skinflint. If simple Monsieur Jourdain, befuddled with his love for rank, had not already knocked at the portals of society, this same Chateaudor of purchased title, who vainly tries to enter exclusive society, might have been accepted as the typical *arriviste.* But he is original neither as miser nor as parvenu; therefore the play to which he gives name becomes interesting only through its stagecraft and the clearness with which a minor character or two is drawn, notably the Marquis de Courbois, a nobleman, blue in blood but scant of purse. Yet even he is but a French kinsman of the Marchese di Forlipopoli, Don Marzio, and Il Conte di Rocca Marina. Although Goldoni says not a word in his memoirs regarding that sparkling comedy *The Fan,* he devotes three entire chapters to *The Ostentatious Miser,* more space, by far, than is given to any single play. In spite of this effort to convince his readers that the verdict delivered on a night of "icy chilliness" at Fontainebleau was unjust, his last comedy failed because it deserved to fail. The novelty of a foreigner

writing a play in French had passed. Moreover, old age had dimmed this foreigner's dramatic vision.

"Goldoni has emptied his bag!" his Venetian audience exclaimed after the dismal failure of *The Whimsical Old Man* in 1754. He filled it successfully, however, many times thereafter with such strikingly naturalistic plays as the *Villeggiatura* series, *The Boors*, and *The Chioggian Brawls*; but when he took from it *The Ostentatious Miser,* it was indeed empty. During his long lifetime, this marvellous magician had drawn from his magic bag fully two hundred and sixty tragedies, tragi-comedies, romantic and poetic dramas, pure comedies, scenarî, melodramas, and merry plays for music. Except as the librettist of a few trivial musical pieces he did not tempt dramatic fortune again. The pity is that he tempted it once too often. To have closed his long career with *The Beneficent Bear* would have been the fitting curtain to his artistic life.

XVI

GOLDONI AND MOLIÈRE

ON the 21st day of January, 1793, Louis XVI mounted the steps of the guillotine in the Place de la Révolution, his last words to those whom he termed "his unfortunate people" being cut short by drumbeats and cries of hate. It is extraordinary that at a time so appalling the representatives of the people should have honoured a foreigner who had held a post in the royal household; yet on February 7th, 1793, barely a fortnight after "Citizen Capet" had been put to death, Marie-Joseph de Chénier, a poet and deputy, whose more brilliant brother was soon to meet a similar fate,[1] arose in the national convention and pronounced these words, remarkable for a moment when France, having murdered her King, stood at bay before angry Europe:

> Kings encourage letters through pride. From a spirit of gratitude, justice, and healthy policy, free nations should uphold them. I shall not expand this truth uselessly for Frenchmen and, above all, for legislators; but acting in accordance with a petition sent to your committee on public instruction, I am here to arouse the national honour in the cause of an old foreigner, an illustrious author, who, for thirty years, has called France his home, and whose talents and probity have earned the esteem of Europe.

[1] André-Marie de Chénier, guillotined July 25th, 1794.

Goldoni, this wise author and moralist, whom Voltaire has styled *the Molière of Italy*, was called to France in 1762 by the former government. Since 1768 he has enjoyed an annual pension of 4000 livres; this pension, comprising his whole fortune, being paid him during that time from the funds of the civil list. Since last July he has received nothing, and now one of your decrees reduces to penury this octogenarian, whose worthy writings have made him deserve so well at the hands of both France and Italy. At the age of eighty-six, with no other resource than the good heart of a nephew who shares with him the proceeds of his unremitting toil, he sinks to his grave, oppressed by infirmities and miseries, yet blessing Heaven that he dies a Frenchman and a Republican."

Goldoni's republicanism is a matter of considerable doubt, yet Chénier's glowing words inspired the national convention to the passage of a bill decreeing that the annual stipend of 4000 livres, accorded him in 1768, should henceforth be paid him from the national treasury.[2] By one of those ironies that often make historical truth stranger than fiction, Goldoni, the "octogenarian," whose "talents and uprightness had earned the esteem of Europe," as well as of that volatile assembly, lay in his coffin at his lodgings in the rue pavée Saint-Sauveur at the time this action was taken, Chénier being unaware when he made his motion that the man he lauded had died in want on the previous day.

Goldoni's death is not, however, a matter for present comment, but rather the phrase in Chénier's remarkable address in which he, a devoted disciple of the sage of Ferney, speaks of Goldoni as "this wise

[2] The National Convention had already made Schiller a French citizen.

author and moralist whom Voltaire has styled the Molière of Italy." For more than a century the imputation of these words has clung to Goldoni, a stone to drown him. Of all literary handicaps, none is more burdensome than to be likened to a dead master whom the world reveres. In the Venetian's case, the likening is justified by the nature of his work rather than by the manner of its accomplishment. He wrote comedies—five times as many, indeed, as did Molière—but he wrote them in a style quite his own. To call him "the Molière of Italy" is unjust to his originality.

Although Chénier imputes this phrase to Voltaire, no documentary evidence has yet been unearthed to prove that the Apostle of Reason ever so styled Goldoni. Indeed, Voltaire, too shrewd a critic to be led so far afield, appreciated more keenly than any of his contemporaries the very qualities that distinguish the genius of Goldoni from that of Molière.

The personal relations between the "witty, profligate, and thin" philosopher and the Italian master of comedy date from the year 1760, when their common friends, Albergati and Paradisi, warmly recommended Goldoni to Voltaire. This remarkable Frenchman already admired his Italian colleague's works so highly that, in writing to Albergati about him, he was constrained to say that, when he read his comedies, he loved his personality, Goldoni being truly "a good man, a good character, wholly natural, wholly truthful"; while in another letter to the same

correspondent, after nominating Dame Nature as arbiter in the dispute between Goldoni and his adversaries, Voltaire, as will be recalled, put this epigram into her mouth:

> Though every author has his flaws,
> This man Goldoni pictured me.

At a later date, the Frenchman avows that "Nature was right in saying that Goldoni had painted her," Voltaire being on this occasion "her secretary"; and at the same time he declares that "the painter would greatly honour the little secretary if he would deign to put his name somewhere." "He can number me among his most ardent partisans," the philosopher adds, "and I should feel much honoured by a small place in his catalogue." Moreover, in writing to Goldoni before he had met him, he announces himself as his "most outspoken partisan and sincere admirer, and already the best friend that he has in France," and asserts also that Goldoni has purified the Italian stage and "snatched his country from the hands of the harlequins," his comedies being "Italy delivered from the Goths." "Painter and son of nature," Voltaire calls him too; while on a previous occasion he speaks of him as the "child of nature," and at a later date addresses him as "lovable painter of nature." Moreover, he had already declared to Albergati that he had called Goldoni and should ever call him the "painter of nature," while he addresses the dramatist himself as "my dear beloved of nature,"

thereby showing his insight into the Italian's genius; a fact further attested by his statement to Goldoni himself that he is always charmed by the "ease and naturalness of his style."

Voltaire was alive to Goldoni's faults as well, for when the Venetian proposed to write another opéra bouffe, he said that "that sort of thing does not seem within his province." But he appreciated his moral qualities no less than his naturalism, a fact evidenced by his statement that Goldoni's comedies "all end in a moral that recalls both the subject and the plot of the play, and proves that this subject and this plot are designed to make men wiser and better." Furthermore, Voltaire declared that *The Beneficent Bear* was written by an Italian who was able to give models of good taste to any country, and that this "comedy in the right style written by a foreigner marked an epoch in French literature." [3]

Although when he visited him at Ferney in 1760, Casanova [4] told Voltaire that he considered Goldoni the Molière of Italy, it seems unlikely that the great Frenchman himself ever so distinguished our dramatist, Chénier's words being doubtless spoken, as Giuseppe Guerzoni suggests, "merely to touch the hearts of his colleagues in the national convention, which were never, as we know, of delicate fibre." As this author goes on to say: "What is excusable

[3] Voltaire's *Correspondance:* June 19, July 21, September 5 and 24, December 23, 1760; May 10, November 9, 1763; May 3, June 30, 1764; March 16, April 4, 1772.

[4] *Mémoires de J. Casanova de Seingalt écrits par lui-même.*

in Chénier on such an occasion is no longer so to the man who is asked to pronounce, not a political opinion, but a literary judgment, these words, 'Goldoni is the Molière of Italy,' being so contrary to all fact, biographical, historical, literary, and dramatic, that they do not even possess the comparative value of metaphor." [5]

Voltaire was too acute in his judgment of Goldoni to have termed him "the Molière of Italy" except in a tone of banter. There being no documentary evidence to confirm Chénier's statement that he did so call him, the mistake of foisting this unwieldy epithet upon the "painter of nature" should with greater verisimilitude be attributed to Goldoni's own countrymen, who, in ridicule at least, had so likened him long before his correspondence with Voltaire began. Indeed, as early as 1751, Goldoni, irritated by the captious critics of Turin, who, at each of his productions, said, "This is good, but it is not Molière," protests that it had never entered his head "to compare himself with the French author." Continuing, he says:

[5] *Il Teatro italiano nel secolo XVIII.* In elucidation of this point Professor E. Maddalena of Vienna, writes the author of the present work as follows: "It does not seem to me either, that Voltaire can have called our Goldoni *the Molière of Italy.* M.-J. Chénier attributed this definition to Voltaire, thinking that he was thus faithfully summing up the manifest opinion of the philosopher concerning the Venetian playwright. On this point may be found several questions and answers in the *Giornale degli eruditi e dei curiosi* (1884), published at Padua, but no conclusion is reached." In continuation of Professor Maddalena's argument it may be added that a correspondent of Cesarotti (Michel Van Goens), writing Feb. 8, 1768, compares Goldoni to Molière, and Cesarotti himself thus eulogizes Goldoni.

I knew that those who pronounced this vague and ridiculous judgment merely went to the theatre for the sake of making the circuit of the boxes and indulging in small talk. I was acquainted with Molière and respected this master of the art as highly as the Piedmontese, and I was seized instantly with a desire to give them a convincing proof of it. I immediately composed a comedy in five acts and in verse, without masks or change of scene, of which the title and principle subject were *Moliere* himself.

It would seem from the above passage that, nearly ten years before Goldoni entered into correspondence with Voltaire, his fellow-countrymen had begun to compare him with Molière, and that he deprecated the comparison. As his fame grew and they became proud of his achievements, he, to quote M. Vaperau, "received from his compatriots the qualifications of 'great' and also of the 'Italian Molière.'" [6] Of this Goldoni gives ample testimony himself when relating how a hostess, "whose exaggeration should be pardoned" because she was "well-bred and polite," introduced him to a young Parisian blockhead as "M. Goldoni, the Molière of Italy." That he revered the Frenchman and realized his own inferiority to him is attested more than once in his memoirs. In declaring character studies to be the source of good comedy, he says: "It is through them that Molière began his career and attained to a degree of perfection only indicated by the ancients and still unequalled by the moderns." When he saw *The Misanthrope* performed at the Comédie Française, he remarked that "luckily he knew the piece," it being "the one among

[6] *Dictionnaire des littératures.*

Molière's works that he most esteemed." "It is a play of unequalled perfection," he adds, while acclaiming Molière "the first comic author who dared to represent the manners and follies of his own age and his own country." Witnessing that performance of *The Misanthrope,* he longed for the joy of seeing one of his own comedies played by such artists; "yet the best of my plays," he sighed, "is not worth the poorest of Molière's." His finest tribute to the greatest of French dramatists is found, however, in the following lines from his comedy *The Ball,* wherein he shows a keen appreciation of Molière's genius, truth being its saliency:

> Molière's renown arose, in fact, because
> He studied how the truth might please. Depicting
> The French, he showed upon his merry stage
> The scenes of every day. Divinities,
> Fine airs, and styles had wearied them; now, manners
> And trenchant satire gave them greater joy.
> Italy, too, if she be fond of change,
> With greater reason should delight in truth
> Whenever she discovers it; for that
> Which pleases all and ever pleases must
> Forsooth endure throughout eternity.

When speaking of those who "so awkwardly compare the Venetian with the French author," Goldoni adds that this is to compare "the pupil with the Master." Again, in dedicating *The Antiquarian's Family* to Federigo Borromeo, he says that if "I possessed Molière's wit, I would do in Italy what Molière did in France."

Goldoni was not the pupil of Molière, nor was the best of his plays inferior to the poorest of the Frenchman's; still there are points of similarity between the two which should not be entirely overlooked. Both learned their technic in the same school—the Improvised Comedy of Italy. By discarding the stereotyped characters and farcical intrigues of that comedy for true characterization and human situations, each created a national comedy of manners. Bearing in mind the nuance that distinguishes naturalism from realism, a modern shade of meaning that makes realism the broader art, because, though painting life as the artist sees it, it is suggestive, as well,—naturalism being no more than the accurate portrayal of that which actually lies within the artist's vision—it may be said that Molière was a realist and Goldoni a naturalist, the Frenchman seeing further, though no more faithfully, in his presentation of humanity than the Italian. This is true certainly of the greatest efforts of both poets. Goldoni's Venetian comedies are true pictures of the life of the people, yet no philosophy underlies their faithful humour. On the other hand, Molière's portrayals of French society present side by side with what their author terms "ridiculous likenesses," his love of truth and his implacable enmity to imposture and formalism. Nowhere does Goldoni poise his lance and ride in battle array against the vices and foibles of his time. Instead of making them an issue, he is content to point his finger.

As coincidence it may be noted that both dramatists attended for a time a school taught by Jesuits, and that both studied law, although Goldoni alone practised at the bar. Moreover, each of these masters of comedy, when harassed by the critics of his day, defended his art by a dramatic skit, Molière's being styled *The Criticism of the School for Wives (La Critique de l'Ecole des femmes),* and Goldoni's *The Comic Theatre,* each being a dialogue rather than a play, in which its author sets forth his theories of dramatic art. Moreover, in *The Versailles Impromptu,* Molière presented a picture of life behind the scenes, proclaiming therein his histrionic creed, while in Goldoni's *Comic Theatre* an experienced comedian instructs a novice in the art of acting.[7] Goldoni, therefore, in a single play emulates two of Molière's, if indeed the disjointed *Comic Theatre* may be termed a play; for while Molière in *The Criticism of the School for Wives* presents a fairly well rounded comedy, Goldoni's polemic, *une poétique mise en action,* as he styles it, is nothing more than a series of scenes, lacking in coherence and presenting neither a real conflict nor its solution.[8]

[7] Shakespeare's charge to the players in *Hamlet,* Molière's talk to his players in *L'Impromptu de Versailles* and Goldoni's dialogue between an experienced actor and an inexperienced actress in *Il Teatro comico,* show that the histrionic creeds of these masters of dramatic art were similar, simplicity and fidelity to nature, as opposed to the prevalent fustian, being their tenets.

[8] In three scenes of *The Ball* (*Il Festino*)—Act I, scene 5; act II, scene 13; and act V, scene 5—Goldoni also defends his own work after the manner employed by Molière in *La Critique de L'Ecole des femmes.*

Although the coincidences in the lives of Molière and Goldoni that have been noted establish a casual relationship between the two authors, these occurrences are merely fortuitous. It is in their treatment of similar subjects that the closest agreement between them lies. Here Goldoni trespasses on Molière's preserves and, poacher that he is, presents but a sorry figure; *The Punctilious Ladies (Le Femmine puntigliose)* alone among the dozen or more of his comedies, the plots or principal characters of which are borrowed from Molière, being in any degree equal to the inspiration.

Although in these instances Goldoni is manifestly a plagiarist, he is no such master of the art as the man from whom he plagiarizes, for, unlike Molière, his polishing never enhances the value of the gems he has purloined. On the contrary, in his endeavours to adapt them to his own uses, he destroys also much of their brilliancy. At home in the *campielli* of his native Venice, Goldoni's genius goes astray in foreign parts, his forte lying in the painting of his countrymen in their true colours, his folly in the imitation of great men such as Molière. When unhampered by laborious study of other masters, he became the painter of nature Voltaire acclaimed him, for in his comedies of the Venetian people there is luckily no touch of Molière nor of any other dramatist of the past. Here we find him lisping the soft speech of Venice, while portraying in a lifelike way the men and women of her streets. No need has he

to borrow characters or plots, the people of Venice and their doings supplying him with material, and to spare. Being so fecund and original it is a pity he was ever tempted into poaching upon another man's preserves; yet having wrought clumsily a score or more of Molière's plots and characters into comedies neither French nor Italian, he courts comparison with the master, and becomes to those who know him least, the Molière of Italy. Being the most natural of Italy's mirthful sons, it is wrong to compare him with the soul of Gallic wit; yet having wilfully trespassed on French soil, it is but just that he should be arraigned.

"I was born peaceful," he says, "and have always preserved my coolness of character," a statement that accounts for his failure to answer his enemies in *The Comic Theatre* with the stinging irony Molière uses in *The Criticism of the School for Wives* and *The Versailles Impromptu;* it accounts, too, in considerable degree, for the forgiving and peace-loving character presented as Molière in the comedy that bears his name *(Il Moliere),* this creation being a subjective Goldoni, quite as much as an objective Molière. This five-act comedy in verse, presented at Turin at a time (1751) when Goldoni was being attacked for not emulating Molière, tells between its lines the story of its author's literary heart-burnings. Though ostensibly characterizing the greatest of French dramatists, in accordance with the picture presented of him in the Sieur de Grimarest's

gossipy biography,[9] this play is in reality Goldoni's answer to his critics, the following passage, for instance, being his own apology for working at fever-heat to please the multitude, rather than the plea of his protagonist, who sometimes spent a year upon a single play, until its verse was indeed "adorned with lofty melody":

> 'Gainst captious friends, curt silence I array.
> Uneven is my style, I trow; yet chance
> Is not the cause. To artisans I speak,
> And to the nobly born as well, with each
> His tongue employing. In such variety
> Of style, one scene the man of elegance
> Will please, mayhap; another overjoy
> The populace. If glory were my aim,
> And not to win the multitude, with care
> Enough and ample time, perchance I might
> Adorn my verse with lofty melody.

Molière tells a double story, the opposition to the great dramatist's marriage with Armande Béjart (here called Isabelle) on the part of jealous Madeleine Béjart, ending in a victory for youth, and the triumph of the dramatist over his enemies on the occasion of the first public performance of *The Hypocrite (Le Tartuffe)*, two events in no way contemporaneous, yet justified in being made so by poetic licence. Molière's comrade, Michel Baron, appears under the name of Valère, and Chapelle, the dramatist's lifelong friend, as Léandre; moreover, Goldoni courts a comparison with Molière little short of

[9] *La Vie de M. de Molière,* by J. L. Le Gallois, Sieur de Grimarest.

odious by the introduction of Pirlone, a character with the attributes, but not the acumen of Tartuffe,[10] a whimpering, cringing hypocrite, who only serves to demonstrate how ill at ease the Italian is when upon the great Frenchman's own ground. *Molière* is by no means a bad play, indeed it is superior to the one by George Sand upon the same subject; yet in courting comparison with the most virile masterpiece of the great Frenchman it attempts to portray, it becomes bad, Pirlone being an abject Tartuffe, clumsily imitated, and the Béjart women, the one a termagant, the other a simpering coquette.

There is such affinity, however, between men of letters that Goldoni's subjectivity, whether conscious or unconscious, places on Molière's lips many an expression befitting his character, as for instance this passage, in which the rapture of literary success is expressed at the moment when Molière's *Hypocrite* has triumphed upon the stage:

> What ecstasy successful authors feel!
> Fatigues endured! Chill perspiration shed!
> (*To La Béjart, who would interrupt*)
> In peace, the joy that fills my soul, pray let
> Me drink, alone, content. To all who sought
> To harass me, full pardon I extend;
> My joy is therefore sweeter, more sincere.
> With happy augury and generous wish
> Around me press both enemies and friends,
> Since those who once despised Tartuffe to his
> Esteem are won by popular applause;

[10] Pancrazio in *I Due gemelli veneziani* is another hypocritical character with the attributes of Tartuffe.

So true it is that men to the event incline
As do the golden wheat-sheaves to the wind.

Although in this play Goldoni often speaks ex-cathedra, the gloominess and irascibility of Molière's nature are well indicated, together with his keenness and sureness of observation, his perseverance, moral earnestness, and unquenchable enmity to cant, things either foreign to Goldoni himself or less clearly developed in him than in the Frenchman he is portraying; therefore, *Molière,* in spite of the Goldoni in him, is a creditable characterization. The Italian author is on alien soil, however; hence this play is at best but an acceptable presentation of a subject foreign to his genius.

In his treatment of the Don Juan legend, Goldoni again courts comparison with Molière and is dwarfed by him, his libertine being not a *grand seigneur,* representative of a caste and an age such as the Frenchman depicted, but rather a cowardly seducer and a debauchee, besotted by excess. The vices of Molière's Don Juan are tempered by a courage that wins reluctant admiration; the poltroonery of Goldoni's seducer in the face of death loses for him the last vestige of our pity. Molière's Don Juan, defiantly following to his final doom the animated statue of the man he has both wronged and murdered, is the same proud, vicious nobleman of France who a generation later bravely mounted the steps of the guillotine with a sneer for the canaille on his haughty lip, while Goldoni's Don Giovanni, though "natural

and not supernatural," as his author describes him, is but a village rake.

In all justice it should be said that he was conceived at an early period of Goldoni's career, *Don Juan Tenorio;* or, *The Debauchee (Don Giovanni Tenorio, o sia Il Dissoluto)*, having been presented to the public of Venice during the carnival of 1736, when the dramatist was only twenty-nine years old and had not yet developed his naturalistic talent. Although this comedy ostensibly presents Goldoni's version of a Spanish legend [11] which had already been treated by a number of authors, including Cicognini and Perrucci in Italy, Molière in France, and Shadwell in England, in reality it was written for the purpose of revenge upon La Passalacqua, the actress, who, it will be recalled, played fast and loose with Goldoni's young affections by deserting him for Vitalba, a Thespian.

In a scene wherein Elisa, a shepherdess, is surprised by Carino, her faithful swain, in the company of Don Giovanni, Elisa speaks the actual words La Passalacqua used to exculpate herself when Goldoni discovered her in Vitalba's arms, the name *Carino* bestowed upon the injured shepherd being Carlino, the diminutive of Carlo, the author's own Christian name, minus a single letter. Here Goldoni appears inferior to Molière in gentlemanly in-

[11] *El Burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra,* commonly attributed to Tirso de Molina; the original Spanish play in which this legend is first put upon the stage, was produced early in the eighteenth century, Don Juan Tenorio being the name of its protagonist.

stinct, for although the Frenchman is believed by many to have revealed the sufferings of his own heart in several instances, in order to uphold this contention it becomes necessary to read assiduously between his lines; whereas Goldoni paraded his questionable amour openly, an offence against good taste, pardonable perhaps on the score of youth had he not at a ripe age flaunted it again in the pages of his memoirs.

But Goldoni's character is as different from Molière's as his genius is foreign to the Frenchman's. The one was light-hearted by nature and never overborne by sorrow or misfortune, the other as serious and morose at times as Alceste, his misanthrope, Molière's views, like his experiences, being deeper and farther reaching than those of his transalpine rival. Yet both were at heart optimists, else they could not have expressed themselves best in comedy. There is a serious phase in Molière's work, however, indicative of the tragedy he lived,—a sadder note than is ever sounded by genial Goldoni, whose life, save in its last moments, was a continuous comedy.

Nowhere in the coincidental work of these two geniuses are the temperamental differences in their natures so marked as in their presentment of avarice, a subject Molière treated in his immortal comedy, *The Miser (L'Avare)*, and Goldoni on five occasions. In not a single instance, however, does the Italian clothe avarice with attributes at once compassionate and contemptible, his misers being but stage puppets set up to be laughed at, whereas

Molière's Harpagon, in spite of his farcical conduct, is a believable human creature, who, though debased by love of gold, is sympathetic as well as odious. In the scene where he discovers the loss of his treasure, he is no longer the laughing-stock of an amusing farce, but the pitiful victim of a corroding vice, made tragic by truth to human nature.

Among Goldoni's avaricious characters Harpagon's nearest emulation is found in Ottavio, the miser of *The True Friend (Il Vero amico)*. Besides following Molière and Plautus scrupulously in the presentment of a niggardly father who buries his treasure only to have it fall into the hands of his offspring, Goldoni presents in this play the sentimental story of a lachrymose hero, who sacrifices his love on the altar of friendship. Ottavio, however, the father of the girl, whom the hero loves but dare not win because she is affianced to his friend, is but Harpagon in an ill-fitting garment. Though he conceals his treasure in a well instead of in a garden, and for the sentimental purpose of his author dies conveniently of grief on discovering the loss of it, he is merely a grotesque puppet, in no wise so human as his masterly prototype.

In speaking of *The Miser (L'Avaro)*, a one-act prose comedy in which he again treats avarice, Goldoni remarks that "its title indicates one of those characters which seems to have been worn threadbare by the masters of the art." He adds, however, that "his is a new kind of miser, who is not worth the

others," a criticism likewise applicable to his other victims of "the good old gentlemanly vice of avarice," to wit, Pantalone, in *The Jealous Miser;* Chateaudor, in *The Ostentatious Miser;* and Don Properzio, in *The Contriving Woman;* they being characters a discussion of whose merits seems idle, since they are in no respect "worth" the misers of either of those masters of the art of comedy, Plautus and Molière.

Although in several of his comedies Molière held the empiric doctors of his day up to scorn and mockery, Goldoni seeks to emulate him only in *The Feigned Invalid (La Finta ammalata),* a comedy frankly imitated from Molière's *Love as a Doctor (L'Amour médecin),* yet lacking in the trenchant satire of the original. Indeed, Goldoni takes the French master to task for having caricatured medicine too severely. The fact that his own father had been a medical man should perhaps excuse our Venetian for the gingerly manner in which he satirizes the faculty; the introduction in this play of a physician "at once wise and gentlemanly," to serve as an honest counterfoil for a charlatan and an obsequious ignoramus, being made in order to uphold the tenets of a profession in the efficacy and worthiness of which Goldoni, unlike his great predecessor, manifestly believed. His play thereby becomes a tract instead of a satire, thus losing its right to serious dramatic consideration. Together with the comedies dealing with avarice, it may be dismissed as

not "worth" those of Molière, Goldoni's power lying in good humour and naturalistic portraiture, not in caustic satire such as the French master employed against the doctors who had proved themselves so incapable in his own regard.

Although there are traces of Molière's influence in other Goldonian comedies, so slight and unimportant are they that to draw further comparisons here seems futile, since to do so would merely necessitate calling further attention to the inferiority of Goldoni to Molière whenever he trespasses upon the master's soil. In one comedy, however, the Venetian, while challenging direct comparison with Molière, is not utterly dwarfed by him, the single instance being *The Punctilious Ladies (Le Femmine puntigliose)*, a play suggestive of *The Burgher a Gentleman (Le Bourgeois gentilhomme)* in that it treats of social climbing.

So humorous a character is Monsieur Jourdain, the titular rôle of Molière's comedy, that we are likely to overlook his inconsistencies, as well as the loose-jointed construction of the play in which he appears. Monsieur Jourdain, moreover, is made to play a part inconsistent with the shrewdness whereby he has amassed his fortune; certainly, no sane man would be imposed upon by the ridiculous Mamamouchi ceremony. Therefore, although Monsieur Jourdain has been accepted universally as emblematical of social climbing, he is an emblem rather than a naturally drawn character; for, laughable

though he is upon the stage, in real life his family would petition the authorities to commit him to a madhouse.

The French *arriviste,* to be sure, is a masculine type, and male snobs are to be found the world over; yet to typify the class that is elbowing its way into society wherever it exists, a woman rather than a man should be chosen, society being a feminine oligarchy in which the voice of man is raised but futilely, his function therein being to pay attentions, as well as pay milliners' bills, but not to legislate. In selecting a socially ambitious woman from the provinces as his protagonist, rather than a metropolitan shopkeeper, whose very calling should have taught him that the bridging of class distinctions is almost impossible, Goldoni, in this instance, shows a truer insight into cosmopolitan life than does Molière. Nor is he led away from a true comedy theme by any vulgar descent into fantastic farce, such as the Frenchman made in order to regale his King with oriental mummery. On the contrary, the Venetian draws a true picture of the society of his time, *The Punctilious Ladies,* or, to give it a more modern significance, *The Smart Women,* being a comedy of manners so lifelike that with slight alteration it might pass current as a representation of modern social life.

The heroine, Donna Rosaura, the daughter of a rich provincial merchant, comes to Palermo with her doting husband and her ill-trained servants, resolved

to cut a dash in metropolitan society and be able to tell her friends at Castell' a Mare that in Palermo she was received in the best society. When the play opens, her irons are already in the fire, Count Lelio, an impecunious young nobleman, having promised to get her an introduction to Countess Beatrice, the queen of Palermo society, of whom he is the cicisbeo. The means by which many a modern parvenue elbows her way into "smart" circles are so cleverly set forth that it is difficult not to read London or Paris for the eighteenth-century Palermo of the text, social promotion being apparently as flourishing a trade in Goldoni's time as in our own.

The social promoter of to-day deftly arranges a game of "auction" at which he, or she, plays with the lady seeking an entrée into the charmed circle. In order that their opponents, among whom is the reigning queen of society, may win, both overbid their hands, the climber of course paying her partner's losses. In the plucking of Donna Rosaura, a wager takes the place of "auction," she being coached by Count Lelio to bet with Countess Beatrice that it is ten o'clock when it is eleven. Receiving a jewelled watch as his fee, Lelio presents the countess to his humble client; but when the noble visitor asserts that it is eleven o'clock, Donna Rosaura is so over-awed by her august guest that, forgetting the wager she has been coached to make, she humbly admits the countess's infallibility. Count Lelio is obliged to nudge her, and lead the conversation back

into appropriate channels, until Donna Rosaura has the wit to lay a hundred *doppie* that it is noon at eleven o'clock, the proceeds of which factitious bet the countess pockets; whereupon she deigns to ask Donna Rosaura to attend a *conversazione,* though she scorns to include in her invitation Don Florindo, the climber's doting husband.

This man is uxorious, a failing which Pantalone, his dead father's friend, thus seeks to eradicate:

> It is well to love your wife, but not to your own ruin. A husband who loves his wife too much and is blinded by his love and led by it, is in a worse state than one who is infatuated with a mistress. Fascinating though she may be, it is always possible to free oneself from a mistress, but a wife yielded to at the beginning must be suffered perforce. If the mistress, to keep her protector's love, sometimes submits to it, the wife, conscious of her own dominion over her husband's heart, commands, demands, and expects, until the poor man is obliged to yield to force what once he yielded too readily to love.

Being asked how a wife may be made tractable against her will, this practical man of affairs suggests a beating, whereupon the horrified husband asks him if under similar circumstances he would beat his own wife. "For the sake of appearances," he says, "I should beat her in a locked room without any one's knowing about it, but I should beat her."

While weak Don Florindo is being thus admonished by this most sophisticated of all Goldoni's Pantalones, his ambitious wife is making her first appearance in fashionable circles. Meeting at the Countess Beatrice's two other countesses, she sees

their noses tilt haughtily upward when they learn that she is a shopkeeper's daughter, though their swains are polite to her, as men usually are in such circumstances.

After publicly snubbing the upstart, these punctilious ladies resolve to pay her a surreptitious visit, each for her own ends. The first to present herself is the Countess Clarice, her object being to get a bargain in silk from among the three pieces Rosaura has brought to Palermo to be made into gowns by a smart dressmaker. But when the haughty visitor learns that the silk is of Venetian manufacture, she scorns it utterly, since "to be pretty, silk must be made in France"; whereupon her parvenue hostess gives ex-cathedra utterance to the following speech in which "America" may be substituted for the word "Italy," with profit to our own countrywomen:

> Alas, countess, opinion governs. They know how to work in Italy just as well as they do in France; yet we women make it a point of honour to insist that foreign goods are better than Italian, and if our workmen wish to sell their products successfully, they must pretend they are made in France. Thus sacrificing to greater profits its self-esteem, poor Italy discredits itself through the false sentiments of Italians themselves!

Unmoved by this patriotic outburst, Countess Clarice departs abruptly, and meets at the door her friend Countess Eleonora, to whom she explains her call by saying that she has been to the little shopkeeper's to buy gold brocade, the Countess Eleonora replying that her aim is to purchase Holland cloth.

Being left waiting at the door while Brighella, the servant, repeats this conversation to his mistress, Countess Eleonora departs in a huff; whereupon Donna Rosaura, undaunted by the snubs she has already received, sends Brighella in hot pursuit with her apologies; a new source of offence, since in the punctilious world to which the countess belongs no lady may be waylaid by a footman.

To be received in society, Donna Rosaura is prepared to suffer any affront, yet the only house she enters is opened by a hundred *doppie*. To win her social sponsor's gormandizing husband to her cause, she invites him to partake of the pheasants and partridges she has received from her place in the country, and when he is assured that her purse will pay for the supper, he compels his wife to give a dance in her honour. Yet the very occasion that should have been this little climber's making proves her undoing, Countess Eleonora having vowed vengeance for the affront of having been kept waiting at her door.

The following scene in which this punctilious lady and her friends humiliate Donna Rosaura displays Goldoni's deft stagecraft, learned in the school of The Improvised Comedy. The place is an illuminated ball-room, in which Countess Beatrice, Count Onofrio, her husband, and Count Lelio, her cicisbeo, are awaiting the guests, the music having already begun to play an overture.

Enter Countess Clarice attended by a supernumerary gentleman. Two more super ladies and gentlemen. Beatrice advances to receive the ladies, who enter on the arms of their escorts. When they have entered, Beatrice seats the three ladies at centre, the gentlemen at right and left conversing together. Lelio sits apart, and Beatrice, after having paid her compliments to the ladies, sits by Lelio. The overture continues; enter meanwhile Rosaura and Florindo. Beatrice arises, goes to receive her, seats her near Clarice, and returns to Lelio. Florindo joins the gentlemen. Clarice and the two ladies bow coldly to Rosaura and continue whispering together. Soon Clarice arises, and approaching Beatrice, pretends to talk with her; the other two ladies rise, approach Clarice, and leaving Rosaura alone, speak in whispers with Clarice. Florindo rises to speak to Rosaura, but she angrily repulses him and he returns to his seat. Enter Countess Eleonora and Count Ottavio. Beatrice arises, goes to meet her, and leads her toward the seat beside Rosaura, speaking low to her; Rosaura shakes her head. Enter a dancing-master, who stops the overture and orders a minuet. Musicians play. At Beatrice's command, the dancing-master takes Rosaura and begins the minuet with her. While Rosaura dances, exeunt the ladies one by one, the gentlemen following their ladies. Lelio, to halt them, rises and follows them. Rosaura, seeing all the guests leave before the minuet has ended, turns angrily upon Beatrice, who flies into a rage. Musicians stop playing.

Here occurs the first written dialogue, the above being acted in pantomime, or, perhaps, with improvised dialogue:

ROSAURA

What! such an insult to me!

BEATRICE

The insult is to me, and I receive it on account of you.

FLORINDO

(*Aside to Rosaura*) Let us go, let us go; I shall make them answer to me.

BEATRICE

Confound the day I met you.

ROSAURA

From a woman of your sort, nothing better could be expected.

Not to dwell too long upon Donna Rosaura's heart-burnings, let it be said that, having packed her trunks for Castell' a Mare and loaded her servants and her husband in her travelling coach, she, while the postilion cracks his whip outside, forces herself into Countess Eleonora's house in the midst of a conversazione and plays this final card of revenge:

I thank you ladies for your kindness. I thank you for the civility some of you have deigned to show me in private, as well as for the permission given me to make this final statement in public. In flattering myself that I might be admitted into your circle, I confess that I aimed too high. Yet, in order that the explanation I shall make of the motives inspiring this longing on my part may be understood, pray remember, in the first place, that I was brought up in a place where, commerce having obviated class distinctions, decent people treat each other familiarly and talk unreservedly; therefore it was no effrontery for me to hope that, with but little more difficulty, I might be admitted into the society of the ladies of this city. . . . If an introduction to your circle was offered to me for cash, it is pardonable for me to have believed that even I had the right to aspire to it. I speak without reserve; I take off my mask, hurt whom I may. For a hundred *doppie* Countess Beatrice sold me her mediation, and for that price assured me an introduction into the society of you ladies. . . . I bear neither her nor you a grudge; it is sufficient for me to have shown that I am neither foolish, weak, nor presumptuous. My carriage awaits, my husband urges haste, I am returning to my native town, and with me I shall carry the recollection of your

condescension and my misadventure. Furthermore, in reward for the kindness you have shown me, permit me to warn you that both your reputation and your society have been defiled by a perfidious and sordid lady more than your dignity has been offended by my low birth.

Having discharged this parting bolt, Rosaura departs for Castell' a Mare, leaving society scandalized by the disgrace the venality of one of its members has brought upon it. Countess Beatrice is ostracized, and in order that no dishonour shall attach to their order, Count Ottavio collects from the nobility a hundred *doppie* to repay Rosaura the fee she has paid for her social promotion. Yet in spite of this chivalrous restitution, it is difficult not to feel that this little parvenue is a more wholesome and praiseworthy person than the members of the punctilious society she strove so hard to enter. She is no such farcical personification, moreover, as Monsieur Jourdain, but a flesh-and-blood person such as we have all met elbowing her way into society.

Here Goldoni is on his own ground, and standing securely there, he is not overshadowed by his great predecessor. The dialogue of *The Punctilious Ladies* is, to be sure, less scintillating than that of Molière's comedy, and in acting qualities it is inferior, Donna Rosaura being no such "fat part" as Monsieur Jourdain; yet it is doubtful whether just such an upstart as he may be encountered in real life, while no one may travel far in cosmopolitan society without meeting more than one Rosaura—a little bourgeoise, whose head is turned by the gla-

mour of rank. Though striving by every means she can command to enter its charmed precincts, this ambitious climber from Castell' a Mare is endowed with enough common sense to turn her horses' heads thither, after realizing her shame and confounding her enemies, a course of conduct that assures us she will return to her provincial birthplace a wiser and a better woman.

In fidelity to nature lies Goldoni's genius. All the study he put upon the construction of his plays was designed, he declares, in order "not to spoil nature"; yet, except in the single instance of *The Punctilious Ladies,* he not only spoiled nature but debased his own genius as well whenever he trespassed on the soil of his one surpassing rival in the realm of comedy. "We should respect the great masters who have hewn the path of science and art," he announces, "since every age has its dominant genius." In making use of Molière's plots and characters he forgot, alas, his own qualifications to this wise observation, to the effect that "every clime has its national taste," for only when straying from the genial warmth of Venice into a clime to which his southern blood was not attuned does he become insignificant.

XVII

CONCLUSION

DURING the year in which Goldoni laid aside court frills for slippered comfort (1780), Louis XVI suppressed his Italian troupe: henceforth French opera and comedy reigned alone at the Hôtel de Bourgogne until its doors were closed in 1783, the native singers and players being then installed in a new playhouse that bore the name of Goldoni's friend Favart. The name *Comédiens Italiens* still clung to them, however, although the only transalpine artist who remained in their ranks was Carlo Bertinazzi (Carlino), retained because Arlecchino had become naturalized in French comedy.

Before leaving windy Versailles, Goldoni had written the libretti of three opéras bouffes, his last dramatic work,[1] and he had expected to be invited to arrange for the Parisian stage the musical pieces that were given in Paris (1777-1778) by a troupe of visiting Italian *buffi;* but not until these singers had failed to please the French public did they solicit his aid. Although he lamented patriotically their ill success, he did not come to their assistance, his

[1] *L'Isola di Bengodi* and *I Volponi*, 1777; *Il Talismano*, 1779.

pride having been offended by their previous neglect, while he thought the evil of their mistakes was too deeply seated to be remedied at the eleventh hour. In his memoirs, however, he does not glory over the Parisian downfall either of these *buffi* or of the unappreciative comedians who had brought him to Paris; nor does he deplore the failure of a translation of one of his comedies,[2] which appeared upon French boards in 1785, rancour and complaint being foreign to his kindly nature, and his "experience with success both good and ill," too extensive to permit him "to do aught but render justice to the public without sacrificing his tranquillity."

Having undergone these final torments of his professional career, he was at last able to delight in "the honour, love, obedience, and troops of friends," which according to Shakespeare should accompany old age. In the enjoyment of these he shall be left for the time being, two happenings of the days when he played a modest rôle at court having purposely been passed by until the reader should be familiar with *The Beneficent Bear,* as well as its author's long correspondence with Voltaire; the former being pertinent to his acquaintance with Rousseau, and the latter to the visit he paid to the great Frenchman who had extolled his genius.

Rousseau returned to Paris in 1770, and Goldoni, like all the world, wished to meet him, so he requested an interview and was told that if he would

[2] *Un Curioso accidente.*

take the trouble to climb four flights of stairs in the rue Plâtrière, the author of *Emile* would be pleased to see him. Doing as he was bid, the door at the top of the four flights of stairs was opened for him by sodden Thérèse Levasseur, his host's concubine-wife, whom Goldoni mistook for a housekeeper.

Rousseau, who was copying music, extended a "frank and friendly greeting." "Look, sir," said he, with a copy-book in his hand, "I challenge a score to leave a press as beautiful and exact as it leaves my house." Thérèse was summoned to place a log on the fire, and Goldoni's heart became so grieved at seeing "the man of letters employed as a copyist and his wife acting as a servant" that he could hide "neither his chagrin nor his astonishment." Perceiving that something was passing in the mind of the dramatist, Rousseau, who, as we are assured, "was no fool," forced a confession of the cause of his guest's amazement; whereupon this spirited argument ensued, our dramatist being the narrator:

"What!" said Rousseau, "you pity me because I am engaged in copying. You imagine that I should be better employed in writing books for people incapable of reading them, and articles for unprincipled journalists? You are mistaken. I am passionately fond of music; I copy originals, and thereby earn my livelihood; I am amused and that is sufficient for me. But you," he exclaimed, "what are you yourself doing? You came to France to work for the Italian actors, who are a lazy lot, and have no use for your plays. Off with you! Go home, where I know you are both wanted and expected."

"Monsieur," said I, interrupting him; "you are right; I should

have left Paris after experiencing the disregard of the Italian players, but other purposes have detained me. I have been writing a play in French."

"You have been writing a play in French!" said he, with astonishment; "what do you expect to do with it?"

"Give it to a theatre."

"To what theatre?"

"To the Comédie Française. You reproach me for losing my time, but it is you who lose yours without any good results. My play has been accepted."

"Is it possible? I 'm not surprised, however, for the actors have no common sense; they accept or reject at random. It is accepted, perhaps, but it won't be acted, and so much the worse for you if it were."

"How can you form an opinion of a play you have never seen?"

"I know the taste of the Italians as well as that of the French; they are too dissimilar, and, with your permission, your age is not the time at which to begin to write in a foreign tongue."

"Your reflections are just, monsieur, but such difficulties may be overcome. I have entrusted my work both to men of ability and to connoisseurs who appeared to like it."

"You have been flattered and deceived, and you will be the dupe. Let me see your play. I am frank and above-board, and I will tell you the truth."

Authorlike, it had been Goldoni's aim to induce the Citizen of Geneva to read *The Beneficent Bear,* yet luckily the manuscript was in the hands of a copyist, and before he could take it to the rue Plâtrière, a literary friend[3] told him of an experience he had had with Rousseau, which demonstrated clearly the unwisdom of again bearding that boorish philosopher in his fourth-floor den. This friend, it

[3] Goldoni calls him "M——". Madame de Genlis, who tells approximately the same anecdote in her *Souvenirs de Félicie,* also refrains from naming him.

appears, had been invited to read a literary product in the rue Plâtrière, and also to furnish a bottle of good wine for the frugal supper that was to precede the lection. Interpreting this invitation liberally he brought not one but a dozen bottles, eleven of which Rousseau indignantly put out of doors before he would consent to sit down to the chicken and salad Thérèse had prepared. When the reading, thus rudely introduced, began, the author had barely finished a chapter of his work, before his host sprang to his feet and angrily declared that a bearish character in the manuscript was a satirical portrait of himself, a charge the guest as hotly denied, the upshot being a fierce quarrel, followed by an acrid correspondence.

"Rousseau was a bear," Goldoni declares; "he had acknowledged it in this quarrel with his friend; he had only to become addicted to beneficence. He would have said it was he whom I wished to counterfeit in *The Beneficent Bear;* therefore I took good care not to subject myself to his ill temper, and I saw him no more."

In visiting Voltaire at the time of this philosopher's Parisian triumph (1778), Goldoni, instead of gratifying idle curiosity and his author's vanity—as was the case in his pilgrimage to the rue Plâtrière—only repaid a deep-seated obligation, albeit inadequately. Although the disciples of Rousseau may dispute the contention of an American apostle of reason that Voltaire "did more to free the human

race than any other of the sons of men," there is little doubt that he did more to make Goldoni known abroad than any man of his century, for if a genius must needs be discovered, he was the Columbus who revealed his Venetian contemporary to Europe. Goldoni's visit to the Sage of Ferney was a tardy fulfilment of a duty he should in all conscience have performed when he journeyed to Paris in 1762, the route by way of Geneva being but a trifle longer than that through Lyons, where he tarried almost for a fortnight without excuse. Indeed even that most erudite and sympathetic of Goldonians, Professor E. Maddalena, can offer no better reason for his fellow-countryman's neglect to pay his respects to Voltaire at that time, than the surmise that since Voltaire was at odds with the French court, Goldoni felt it would be indiscreet to visit him while on his way to serve the French King.[4] The dramatist's own reason for not passing through Geneva and embracing M. de Voltaire, as the latter fondly expected him to do,[5] was the fear that he might "show overbearing boldness." Moreover he hesitated "to abuse the love and anxiety with which it had been shown he was awaited,"[6] an insufficient reason, it would seem, for not turning aside a few leagues to pay his respects to the great Frenchman who had extolled his genius far and wide. At all events, Goldoni

[4] *Bricciche goldoniane* (*La Visita al Voltaire*).

[5] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, Sept. 5, 1761, quoted by E. Maddalena, op. cit.

[6] Letter to Gabriel Cornet, Aug. 19, 1762.

forwent the expected visit, and did not pay homage to his benefactor until sixteen years later, when Voltaire was the cause of "the last great commotion in Paris under the old régime." [7]

On the day following his arrival in Paris, Voltaire received three hundred visitors, and so many friends and deputations crowded his antechamber on succeeding days that by the end of the week he fell ill. In spite of Dr. Tronchin's admonitions, he refused to deny himself to visitors; therefore, in the words of Madame du Deffand, "all Parnassus from the mire to the summit" flocked to the Hôtel Villette. On Tuesday, February 17th, 1778, when Goldoni wended his way thither, there were at least twenty deferential subjects waiting to be ushered into the presence of the King of intellectual Europe, who, with a dressing-gown for his royal robe and a night-cap for his crown, sat enthroned in pillows. Possibly Benjamin Franklin was there, and Goldoni a bewildered listener, when Voltaire assured his wise guest in the latter's own language, that if he were forty he would go and settle in his happy country, and blessed, at the same time, his young grandson with the words "God and Liberty." [8] Although reproved by Madame Denis for talking English to Franklin, who understood French, Voltaire displayed the same linguistic vanity during his conversation with Goldoni; since, according to a

[7] John Morley: *Voltaire.*

[8] Professor E. Maddalena (op. cit.) suggests that Goldoni was present at the time of Franklin's visit.

pamphleteer who was present, he assured the transalpine dramatist in his own tongue that he considered him the restorer of Italian seemliness and good taste. "We were all astonished," says this witness, "to hear M. de Voltaire speak Italian with as much facility and speed as French, a surprise M. Goldoni augmented by telling us that M. de Voltaire had once written him a letter not only in Italian but in Venetian." [9]

Though in his memoirs he pays full tribute to Voltaire's greatness, Goldoni is singularly reticent regarding his relations with the man to whom he owed European recognition. "All the world wished to see Monsieur de Voltaire," he says, "and happy were those who could talk with him. I was of that number, for I was too deeply indebted to him not to make haste in paying him my homage, and expressing my gratitude." Thus the Venetian acknowledges his debt to his great contemporary and shows that he considered its requital a duty; therefore, although he omitted to pass through Geneva on his way to Paris in 1762, he may be absolved of the charge of utter ingratitude. *"Il caro Goldoni,"* lamented Voltaire at that time,[10] *"il figlio della natura* wishes to let me die without giving me the consolation of seeing him. He wrote from Lyons

[9] An article in the *Journal de Paris* (Feb. 20, 1778) by François de Neufchâteau. This article, dated Feb. 19, 1778, states that the writer visited Voltaire two days before, from which Professor Maddalena, who quotes it (op. cit.), infers that Goldoni's visit took place on Feb. 17.

[10] Letter to Albergati-Capacelli, Aug. 25, 1762.

that he was unable to pass by my house because his wife was with him; yet surely I would not have stolen his wife, and I should have received both of them with as much cordiality as they could meet with anywhere else." Sixteen years passed before Goldoni gave Voltaire the consolation he craved, which, had it been longer deferred, he would have died without receiving.

Two years after his visit to the greatest Frenchman of his century, Goldoni resigned his Italian tutorship in order to pass his declining years in the salubrious valley of the Seine. "Paris is a great region and the court is vast," he had declared shortly after his arrival in his adopted country. "In order to obtain preferment time is necessary." [11] Seventeen years of service and courtiery had been necessary for the attainment of a sinecure for his nephew and a modest pension for himself; therefore the truth of this apothegm is apparent, at least in his case.

Although in his seventy-third year when he retired from the vast court to settle down in Paris, he declares that he still enjoyed good health. He was obliged, however, "to observe certain precautions in order to preserve his vigour"; and although thirteen years of his long life were still to be lived, he began to read attentively a treatise on old age. The place of his Parisian residence at this time (1780) has not been recorded, though possibly he dwelt in the nar-

[11] Letter to Stefano Sciugliaga, Dec. 9, 1764.

row rue pavée Saint-Sauveur where he died; a man of his years, unless forced to move by the stress of misfortune, being unlikely to change his abode.

Soon after he left Versailles his niece, Petronilla Margherita, married in Venice a worthy widower of the latter city, named Chiaruzzi, who with his first wife had assumed charge of her welfare after she had left the convent in which she had been educated. "My nephew and I transferred to her all our Italian property," says Goldoni; and although he makes no mention in his memoirs of the death of his hare-brained brother, it is apparent that this event had taken place previously to his niece's wedding, since at the time Goldoni left Venice he deeded his Italian possessions to Gian Paolo. The marvel is that any property remained to transfer to Petronilla Margherita after it had touched her father's itching palm.

Goldoni rejoiced in his niece's marriage as "an event necessary to his tranquillity"; yet little happened to disturb his peace of mind during the first few years of his retirement from court duties. These years were passed in the enjoyment of convivial society, or in frequenting the theatres of Paris, where he delighted in seeing the works of young authors which he viewed in a way more friendly than critical, his judgment of plays by his contemporaries being strikingly at fault. He applauds, for instance, a worthless tragedy [12] by La Harpe, "the Baby of

[12] *Coriolan.*

literature" as Fréron styled him, and an affected comedy[13] by the Marquis de Bièvre, arch-punster of that day; and contends that a comedy by sycophantic Vigée,[14] which was quickly consigned by the public to the limbo of bad plays, showed its author to be the possessor of "a perfect taste, tone, and style"; yet he is singularly obtuse in his estimate of *The Marriage of Figaro (Le Mariage de Figaro),* the nimble-witted protagonist of which Napoleon declared to be "The Revolution in action." Of this latter play, which shares with *The Barber of Seville (Le Barbier de Séville)* the distinction of being the most masterly French comedy of the eighteenth century, in which its aggressive author turned the full battery of his trenchant wit against the institutions of the old régime at a range so point-blank that the discharge left them tottering on undermined foundations, Goldoni merely says:

> *The Marriage of Figaro* had the greatest success at the Comédie Française, because its author had preceded this title with that of *The Wanton Day* (*La Folle journée.*) No one knew better than M. de Beaumarchais the faults of his play; he had given proof of his talent in this style of writing, and if he had wished to construct a comedy within the rules of the art, he could have done so as well as any one; he merely wished, however, to amuse the public, and he succeeded perfectly well.

Although Goldoni confesses that "the success of this comedy was quite extraordinary," and admits that its predecessor *The Barber of Seville* was "relished and applauded," he is careful to add that "the

[13] *Le Séducteur.* [14] *La Fausse coquette.*

connoisseurs and amateurs of good style made their complaints against these works resound, for in their opinion they were executed for the purpose of degrading the Théâtre Français." A revival of *The Beneficent Bear* which had been announced for the season in which *The Marriage of Figaro* appeared upon the boards of this playhouse was three times delayed,[15] and as no record exists of its having taken place, probably it was postponed indefinitely because of the extraordinary success of Beaumarchais's comedy.

This suggests a human reason for Goldoni's failure to render full justice to the merits of his indefatigable contemporary, who possessed, moreover, a sharp tongue, while the charge of excessive modesty cannot justly be laid at his door. It is possible, therefore, that Goldoni met and disliked Figaro's brilliant creator in the château de Versailles at the time when, glorying in his newly purchased nobility, the latter gave lessons on the harp to Mesdames de France, and was the moving spirit of the intimate concerts in which the royal family delighted. Whether or not this surmise be true, it is certain that Goldoni was at odds with posterity's verdict in his estimate of Beaumarchais's two masterpieces. In fairness to his sense of justice it may be added, however, that he went no further afield in this instance than in his judgment of his own plays, some of the most mediocre of which he places among his best works.

[15] Letter to Le Baron van der Duyn, May 7, 1784, quoted by Charles Rabany, op. cit.

Although Goldoni's critical discernment was occasionally obscured by ardour or prejudice, he took a keen delight in music and painting, as well as in the art he graced, and warmly upheld artistic conscientiousness; humbug being his aversion, as is instanced by this aptly modern conspectus of the wealthy art collector:

> The rich man wishes to have in his study a picture by the painter who has become distinguished. The less fortunate amateur contents himself with mediocrity. Some people employ artists and sculptors so that it may be printed in the catalogue that this picture was painted for Monsieur So-and-so, this bust carved for Madame Such-and-such, while others have their portraits painted for the pleasure of having their faces appear in the salon.

Ever the foe of artistic falsehood, Goldoni made truth his shibboleth, and he wisely believed in the public recognition of artistic merit. "There are men so ill advised," he says, "as to say that the French Academy is useless. . . . On the contrary, it places a crown upon merit and inspires talent to deserve it." Yet this artistic digression is so remote from the events of Goldoni's declining years, that a return to the simple tenor of his life in Paris becomes pertinently necessary.

After his retirement from the court, he continued to delight in convivial companionships, although the ravages old age had made upon his health obliged him to safeguard his digestion by refusing, whenever possible, to sup with his friends. Invitations to dine, however, he accepted with alacrity, and he

seldom failed to attend a gaming party. The Parisian cabmen—recruited in his day as in our own "from among the vilest and roughest of men"—were his especial aversion; yet he boasts of never having had a dispute with any of them, because he always spoke to them "civilly and softly." Still he preferred walking to entrusting himself to their reckless driving, and he delighted particularly in making excursions to Belleville, Passy, or Clignancour, where, in the gardens of friends, he might breathe fresh country air and enjoy agreeable society. The routine of his daily life in Paris he thus describes:

> I arise at nine in the morning and breakfast on *chocolat de santé,* of which an excellent sort is furnished me by Madame Fontain, rue des Arcis. I work until noon, then stroll until two; I am fond of society; I dine out frequently, or at home in the society of my wife.

This patient helpmate was attacked by pleurisy a few years after leaving the court, where she had always been ill at ease, and while she was confined to her room, her lord, whose infidelities she had so frequently condoned, felt it a duty to sit by her bedside and comfort her. "My poor wife," he exclaims, "had paid so much attention to me, that it was necessary for me to pay some to her." He invariably speaks of her in this fondly appreciative way, yet she played but a minor rôle in the comedy of his life. Fond and forbearing, she appears now and then in his memoirs—as a typical bourgeoise,

THE CARD PARTY

Museo Correr

resigned, dutiful, and loyal, yet in no wise companionable to a man of his parts and predilections. "Good Nicoletta!" The term is justly apt. Alas, how few men of genius have had the fortune to be attended through life by wives as innocuously faithful as Goldoni's colourless helpmate! Yet Nicoletta seems to have been more necessary to her husband's well-being during his octogenarian days than at any other period of her wifely companionship, for then at least she played a comforting part in the placid life he here depicts:

> After my dinner I like neither to work nor walk; sometimes I go to the theatre, but more often I play cards until nine in the evening. I return home before ten, take two or three chocolate comfits with a glass of water and wine, which constitute my entire supper. Until midnight I chat with my wife; in winter we sleep together maritally; in summer we occupy twin beds in the same room. I fall asleep quickly and pass the nights peacefully.

Whenever, as happened occasionally, his "head was filled with things that drove sleep away," he worked upon a dictionary of the Venetian dialect, which he had long planned to publish—"an annoying and distasteful" remedy, as he declares, which was narcotically effective to one blessed like himself with a temperament in which "the moral is analogous to the physical." "I fear neither cold nor heat," he asserts in this connection, "and I do not allow myself to become inflamed by anger or intoxicated by joy."

Such was his unruffled character, and such the tranquil life he led during the old age of cards,

which Pope declares to be the world's sole reward for its veterans after the frolics of youth are spent. In Goldoni's case, however, the writing of his memoirs gave old age a recompense far sweeter than cards; since in penning their candid pages he was able to relive in memory, not only the frolics of youth but the triumphs of manhood as well—a joy which only the veterans of the world's achievements may attain.

This task, which occupied his morning hours, he began at the age of seventy-seven, and continued until he reached the eightieth year of his protracted life.[16] So many excerpts from the pages of the Memoirs have appeared in the present work that the reader already knows with what delightful candour their author details his adventures, both seemly and unseemly. "I doubt if in the whole range of autobiography one can find anything of a cheerfuller sweetness," says Mr. Howells.[17] Surely no autobiographer has made himself appear more lovable, or written of his own age with more gentleness than has this cheerfully observant Venetian.

In the first part of the Memoirs, he records quaintly and blithely the events of his life from the time of his birth until his advent in Venice as Medebac's playwright. Here an age is vividly portrayed,

[16] The King's "approbation" of the Memoirs is dated January 20, 1787, his "privilege" to publish them, April 13th of that year, facts which indicate that the writing was finished prior to January 1st.

[17] Introductory essay to the abridgment of John Black's English translation of the Memoirs.

albeit a petty age of finical culture, in which the indolent ruling class expended its flaccid energies in opéra-bouffe wars and the trivial intrigues of petty courts, or frittered its time away in ladies' boudoirs, while a submissive peasantry was mulcted by its tax gatherers, or pillaged by its mercenaries. The reader who lays the Memoirs aside at the end of the first part will feel that he has seen a past age brought to life again; but the second part, in which Goldoni's declared purpose is to give the history of all his comedies, is made tediously dull at times by a too elaborate analysis of their plots, and a too minute detailing of the jealousies and cabals to which they gave rise. The droll humour and ingenuous self-satire which make the earlier pages, as Gibbon declared, even more amusing to read than their author's comedies, are singularly lacking in this second part; and although Goldoni's *bonhomie* pervades the third part, which tells the story of his life in France, this too lacks the vagrant charm with which his youthful adventures are described. Moreover, there is considerable dulness here as well, many chapters being devoted to such ephemeral marvels as ballooning and mesmerism, or the chronicling of state weddings and other festivities.

At the time when the Memoirs went to press, Louis XVI was summoning the Notables of his kingdom to assemble at Versailles. Nowhere in their guileless pages is there any evidence to show that their placid author knew that sedition was alive

in the land, even so momentous an incident as the affair of the Queen's necklace being dismissed in a gingerly manner as a matter of club gossip about which the wits wrote couplets; "for if the French lose a battle, an epigram consoles them," he declares, "and if a new tax is imposed upon them, a vaudeville indemnifies them." Moreover, in speaking of the fêtes held in honour of Marie Antoinette at the time of her marriage, Goldoni fails to mention the catastrophe that resulted in the death of over a hundred persons and the wounding of many times that number, the display of the fireworks which caused it being recorded by him as a thing of great beauty, and Torre, the Italian who devised it, acclaimed as "an artificer who on this occasion carried the pyrotechnic art to the highest degree of perfection."

Yet his apparent blindness to the unrest which was undermining the obsolescent institutions of France ill accords with his minute observations of life. Surely, a man who, before the *Contrat Social* was penned, had expressed by means of a character in *Pamela* sentiments as radical as any voiced by Rousseau, could not have turned an entirely deaf ear to the political views of the philosophers and poets who were his boon companions. Indeed the silence he displays in his memoirs regarding both French and Italian politics is so peculiarly marked that it is easier to suspect him of worldly wisdom than obtuseness, especially when it is remembered that he

was a pensioner of both the King of France and the Duke of Parma. Pertinent to this view, too, is the fact that the publication of the Memoirs was made possible by the liberal subscriptions of the French royal family, as well as those of the many princes, dukes, marquises, counts, and chevaliers whose titled names adorn, in accordance with the custom of the day, their prefatorial pages.

In recording the conclusion of the peace that gave the American States their freedom, Goldoni wisely observes that "the former subjects of Great Britain, having become free and recognized by all the world, may also become formidable." "Will they always remember their good friends, the French?" he asks; yet in framing this sagacious question he committed no political indiscretion: hence, in view of the political wisdom he here displays, it does not seem unjust to suspect that he preferred seeing the wrong of the day in which he lived through "the little hole of discretion," to risking the receipt of a *lettre de cachet,* or even the loss of his pension by a polemical use of his merry pen.

In regard to religion, his memoirs are equally silent. His plays, too, are devoid of all reference either to the Church or his own faith, the laws of Venice being so restrictive in this respect that when, in a comedy, he wished to immure a young lady in a convent, he was obliged to resort to the circumlocutory expedient of sending her to dwell with an aunt in the country. When Chiari, in his *School*

for Widows, applied to an Englishman the word *Panimbruo,* which was used in Venice aspersively of Protestants, Goldoni—to his own profit be it said—pointed out to the Venetian authorities the political indiscretion of permitting stage insults to Protestants; yet there is nothing in this incident to indicate his religious convictions. That he took a liberal, as well as a passive, view of religion, is made clear, however, by this extract from a letter to his friend Albergati:[18]

> I do not disapprove of devotion, though I have not yet had the grace to possess it. I don't know whether I ought to wish that one whom I esteem and love should attain it; yet I am certain that even if you do not become devout, you will love as you have always loved.

Being born a bourgeois, traditionally he was a believer in the sacredness of vested rights; and being a lawyer by profession, he had been educated both to revere custom and act prudently; hence to accuse him of having kept a discreet silence in matters political and religious is merely to acknowledge the formative powers of both inheritance and education. It is well to remember, too, in this connection, that tyrannical laws prevented him not only from satirizing the Church, but the State and its ruling class as well. Whenever he placed a nobleman upon his stage he chose a Milanese or a Neapolitan count—never a Venetian patrician; yet in spite of the care with which he avoided political indiscretion,

[18] Oct. 8, 1765.

he was denounced to the Venetian authorities by an enemy named Zigo for having presaged national misfortunes; while Carlo Gozzi confesses that, with the hope of ruining him, he called the attention of the Government to Goldoni's "exceedingly liberal and democratic tendencies." When it is remembered that he lived under a tyrannical government both in Venice and in France and that he was avowedly peaceful, it becomes possible to see in this placid Venetian a man of far more radical convictions than his writings make him appear. As Luigi Falchi points out,[19] the liberal opinions that are expressed repeatedly in his plays indicate that they were also in his heart and mind. Had he been given a greater licence in expression, "with what satisfaction," says this Italian commentator, "might he not have placed Roman prelates and Venetian patricians upon the stage!"

The product of bourgeois birth and precise education, Goldoni, though a Bohemian by nature, and perhaps both a radical and free-thinker at heart, took too sanely happy a view of life ever to become a knight-errant. The art of comedy calls, however, for no girding of the loins; therefore the world should have no quarrel with him because his peaceable heart prevented him from becoming either a crusader or a fire-brand. No doubt, as he declares, "truth was his favourite virtue," yet discretion was decidedly the better part of his valour, a fact he

[19] Op. cit.

makes apparent in saying: "I am of a pacific disposition, and I have always preserved my coolness of character."

When the Memoirs were published in 1787, six spectacled years still remained to him; though his keen enjoyment of life continued until his merry soul was freed by death. "At my age I read little, and I read only amusing books," he exclaimed, at this time; yet his passion for writing continued until his wizened hand could no longer grasp a pen. Before the Memoirs appeared, he had, in collaboration with a young American of French origin, projected a literary journal in which France and Italy were to be brought into closer intellectual relations, but his co-editor fell in love with an Italian actress whom he married when her first lord died, and, as the capricious lady refused to live in Paris, "the journal ended," so Goldoni states, "before it began"; luckily, it would appear, since he declared on another occasion that "for all the gold in the world, he would not work on a newspaper."

Work evidently had no terror for him, however, and politics no charm, else he could not, during the stirring winter that preceded the fall of the Bastille, have calmly translated *The Beneficent Bear* into Italian, in order that the proceeds of its publication might relieve a friend's distress. Friendship, as warm in his octogenarian heart as love had been during his frolicsome youth, was the inspiration, too, of the translation he finished barely two years before

his death, of *Miss Jenny,* a novel by his friend Madame Riccoboni. Although he was in far from easy circumstances at the time, this translation, too, was made for the purpose of assisting an impoverished friend, in this instance an old Italian who like himself had given lessons in the mother-tongue. Apparently the feather of the pen he used in his old age had dropped, to paraphrase Wordsworth, from an angel of charity's wing.

Alfieri visited him while he was penning the last pages of the Memoirs; but this turbulent poet, so antipathetic by nature, had too slight a regard for comedy to allow Goldoni to see in him more than a notable man of letters. Moratín, too, paid him a visit in 1787, and heard him discourse upon the drama, as well as upon the ingratitude of a country which "obliged him to live far from home supported by a pension"; yet neither this Spanish colleague in the art of comedy nor Alfieri should be numbered among the friends whom he loved "truly and constantly" and whose loyalty brightened his declining years. Though Cochin the artist drew his portrait to adorn the Memoirs, and one Caccia, an Italian banker resident in Paris, sent to Italy for a book to cheer him during an illness, the truest friends of his old age were De la Place the journalist, and Favart the great librettist, both of whom had been his boon companions in the days of Dominical jollity.

In 1790, when Favart was in his eightieth year, and Goldoni and De la Place each in his eighty-third,

a certain Abbé Cosson toasted in verse the friendship of these three old cronies then limping toward the grave. In November of the following year, while savage sentries were pacing before the prison of an execrated King, Goldoni dined with Favart, and in artistic reminiscence and companionship forgot, it is to be hoped, his woes, as well as those of France. Surely a more friendly tribute was never paid by one man of letters to another than is to be found in the following verses, with which the father of opéra bouffe, unmindful of the anarchy that reigned in the land, invited Goldoni to dine:

> To thee, fair Italy's Molière;
> Thalia's foster child and heir!
> Goldoni, dear to heart and mind,
> Whose talent and good taste combined
> To quicken charm in thine own land
> And rescue from the vandal's hand
> The tarnished honour of her stage! . .
> My heart, in reverence thy thrall,
> To-day addresses thee its call:
> Friday (to-morrow) come to me
> At noon: let naught prevent, prithee.

Within six months after these two old soldiers of the pen made merry together, Favart died; less than a year later Goldoni followed him through death's narrow gate, his revenues, like Favart's, having been swept away by Revolutionary events. In July, 1792, the King's civil list was suspended, and with it our court Italian teacher's pension, a petitionary demand that an exception be made in his case being denied.

A few months before this unlucky event happened Goldoni received from the Comédie Française twelve hundred francs in final payment for the perpetual rights of *The Beneficent Bear*—a sum that in all likelihood was his only resource during the last year of his life.[20]

After his pension was revoked he felt the pinch of poverty, and, in all probability, suffered ill health. For several years he had been the victim of "palpitations" which attacked him "during all seasons and at all hours," and which he learned to endure so stoically that even when seized at dinner, or the card-table, "no one suspected that he was suffering intense pain." That these palpitations were the eventual cause of his death is possible, although by no means certain, the events of his life subsequent to the publications of his memoirs being largely conjectural. On March 26, 1791, he wrote to an acquaintance[21] that although he had purged himself on the previous day he was unable to go out as he had hoped because the wind prevented him, and he felt that he had not yet recovered from an illness. In November of that year, he received Favart's panegyric invitation, and during the following August (1792) he dined at an embassy (probably the Venetian) where he met Count Giuseppe Gorani, a literary adven-

[20] On February 1, 1792, he petitioned the Sociétaires of this theatre to give his nephew a pass to its performances, a privilege which was granted on Feb. 6th, to be in force as long as *Le Bourru bienfaisant* remained in the repertory.

[21] Letter to the Signor Segretario N. N., March 26, 1791.

turer who had assisted at Milan in the publication of Verri's periodical, *Il Caffè*. A few days later Goldoni fell ill, and probably never regained sufficient health to sit again at the board of a friend, or to take his accustomed walks. In a letter written at this time he declares that the only things of value that remained to him were "a stout stomach and a tender heart."[22] Fully a year before he had ordered from Madame Fontain,[23] eight pounds of chocolate and three pounds of comfits, but now want had come as an armed man to prevent him from regaling his stout stomach with its favourite luxuries; and as Favart was dead, and convivial De la Place in the shadow of the grave, only good Nicoletta and the nephew whom he "loved and esteemed as if he were his own child" were left to solace that tender heart.

On the sixth of February, 1793, eighteen days after Louis XVI had mounted the scaffold, Goldoni died in the rue pavée Saint-Sauveur,[24] and on the following day Marie-Joseph de Chénier unaware, as has been seen in the preceding chapter, of his death, arose in the National Convention to move that his pension be restored. Three days later, on the motion of this same poet-deputy, Goldoni's widow was granted an annuity of fifteen hundred livres, while

[22] Letter to Masi et Cie., Sept. 3, 1792.

[23] Letter, May 11, 1791.

[24] The certificate of his death, witnessed Feb. 19, 1793, by his nephew, a friend named Laprime, and a public official, sheds no light upon the cause.

on February 17th, Etienne Clavière, who held the financial portfolio in the so-called "Patriotic Ministry," petitioned the actors of the Comédie Française, or, as it was then styled, the Théâtre de la Nation—to give a performance of *The Beneficent Bear* for the benefit of Goldoni's family, a request granted on June 10th. A week later the performance took place, the goodly sum of eighteen hundred and fifty-nine livres and fifteen sous being realized, the receipt of which was duly acknowledged by the dead dramatist's nephew.[25]

When it is remembered that the man whose family was so liberally recompensed at a time so anarchical was a foreigner long attached to the royal household, who had not written for the Parisian stage for over fifteen years, the consideration paid his memory by these regicides appears so astounding as to beggar any explanation other than Chénier's assertion that he had blessed Heaven for being able to die "a Frenchman and a Republican." Although Goldoni's monarchical fellow-countrymen regard this as an unproved aspersion upon his equable character, Clavière fully corroborates Chénier's statement in the petition he addressed to the actors of the national theatre. "Goldoni belonged so thoroughly to the Revolution," says this ill-fated Girondist, "that his greatest anguish was to be obliged by his ills, his old age, and the needs of his wife, to beg for the restor-

[25] The documents regarding these events have been published by Charles Rabany (op. cit.).

ation of a pension he had received from Louis XVI." "I have heard him," Clavière continues, "warmly express the regret that he was unable to throw its patent into the fire that had consumed the attributes of royalty."

Is it reasonable to suppose that at a time when Robespierre was harrying the Girondists, and France was at war with Europe, Chénier would have dared to state openly in a meeting of the Convention that Goldoni was a Republican, unless he knew this to be a recognized fact? Moreover, a pension of fifteen hundred livres was voted unanimously by the seven hundred or more hot-headed deputies composing the Convention to the widow of this foreigner, who had held a royal sinecure and whose literary activities had long since ceased to attract public attention, not one of them gainsaying either the justice of this extraordinary proceeding, or the republicanism of the man whose memory they signally honoured.

Although Goldoni's republicanism, despite the monarchical obsequiousness of his memoirs, becomes from these facts a likely supposition, to conclude that he was converted to this political faith at the eleventh hour, either through fear or because he had ceased to profit by royal preferment, is unjust to his truthful character. That his republicanism was a conviction his peaceable nature prevented him from expressing strongly until free speech obtained, may be inferred with considerable verisimilitude from the fact that forty years before the fall of the Bastille,

he had had the temerity to pen these prophetic words, the radical sentiments of which might well have caused him to be lodged in a Venetian jail:

> I have often heard it said that the world would be more beautiful if it had not been spoiled by men who for the sake of pride have upset the beautiful order of nature. That common mother regards us all as equal; though the arrogance of the great does not deign to consider the small. The day will come when one pudding will again be made of both great and small.[26]

Eighty-four years after this kindly Venetian's death, two reverent fellow-countrymen placed upon a house in the squalid rue Saint-Sauveur, this inscription:

> Here died poor on February 6th, 1793,
> Charles Goldoni, called the Italian
> Molière, author of *The Beneficent Bear,*
> Born in Venice in the year 1707.[27]

It is unfortunate that this grandiloquent misnomer, "The Molière of Italy" should, in glaring injustice both to his modesty and his originality, have been inscribed upon the house in which he died. Although it is true, as Symonds asserts, that not one of his plays bears the stamp of supreme mastery, it is equally true that Goldoni belongs among the eight or ten immortal painters of human foibles.[28] To his

[26] *Pamela nubile,* Act III, scene 3.

[27] The inscription was placed in the rue Saint-Sauveur in 1877 by Senator Costantini and Chevalier Toffoli. Raffaello Barbiera, writing in a memorial pamphlet published by the Società Editrice Teatrale (Feb. 1907) on the occasion of the second centenary of Goldoni's birth, distrusts this identification of the house in which he died.

[28] Raffaello Giovagnoli: *Goldoni a fronte di Molière* in *Carlo Goldoni per cura del comitato,* Venice, Dec. 30, 1883.

impassioned detractors he is merely a nimble craftsman; to his unthinking partisans he is the Italian Molière; yet his name spells Italian comedy, and in the drama of the world his place is unique, no dramatist having painted with equal fidelity to nature the life of a people and an age. Moreover, no moralist of the stage has preached seemliness and virtue in a kindlier tone or employed satire in so impersonal a way. Had his exacting managers permitted him to write his plays with care, and polish them with tenderness, he might possibly have become, as Cesarotti suggests, the greatest comic dramatist of the world; yet while speculating upon the innate possibilities of his genius, it should be borne in mind that he lacked Molière's wisdom, as well as his unyielding enmity to sham.

Goldoni loved the common people, however, and instead of treating them as clowns, he made them likable and consistent human beings. In this respect he is superior to Molière, for while, as our Venetian himself says, he "looked everywhere for nature," the Frenchman's search was confined to the nobility and the bourgeoisie, or their rascally servants. No such cultivated student of Epicurus and Lucretius as Molière, no such independent thinker, either, Goldoni possessed an unerring observation for the things at hand; yet he was too short of sight to penetrate the whole atmosphere enveloping the life he painted, therefore he failed to see its relation to the past, to the future, or even to the times in which he lived.

As inimitable *genre* pictures of bits of humorous life, *The Boors* and *The Chioggian Brawls* are masterpieces; yet while we may laugh at them till tears fill our eyes, and extol at the same time their absolute fidelity to nature, they will never make us ponder. Goldoni saw clearly and plainly everything about him, but he did not study the origin of the things he saw, nor deliberate upon their relation to each other and to the future; therefore, though a great artist, he was not, like Molière, a great philosopher as well. Understanding him as thoroughly as he understands his age, Philippe Monnier [29] thus portrays both the charm and the limitations of this commanding figure of eighteenth-century Venice:

No one ever invented more situations, devised more incidents, wove more plots, blended more episodes, seized upon more laughable characteristics, strung together more parts, staged more characters, concocted more mirth, or scattered and squandered greater riches with a more unconcerned heart. The laughter which escapes from this topsy-turvy jumble is a frank, youthful, and serene laughter, free from all constraint, unburdened by philosophy, unspoiled by cynicism. It gushes forth into the sunlight, the joyful outburst of a merry heart.

Gran Goldoni! once shouted the enthusiastic crowd on carnival evenings dead and gone. Yes, Great Goldoni, who soothes and simplifies, direct as a force of nature, elemental as a creature of the Golden Age! Great Goldoni, open-hearted and genially accordant, abounding in good humour and good will, as limpid as water from a spring, as clear as a crystal! Great Goldoni, who knew how to interpret himself, to control himself, to disseminate himself! And again, Great Goldoni, who, when abused, ridiculed, and misjudged, triumphed over difficulties with his smile, and

[29] Op. cit.

avenged insults by forgiving; who continues to present mankind, whether wicked, miserable, or sorrowful, with a benign example of joy.

Here he is not patriotically exalted, as many Italians have exalted him, nor chauvinistically belittled, as a few Frenchmen have belittled him, but justly given his true place as a naturalist who "soothes and simplifies" our lives and whose humour is the "joyful outburst of a merry heart." Nor is he deified as "the Italian Molière"—an epithet beneath the crushing weight of which he has all but perished. In Venice he is still *Gran Goldoni,* beloved of her people,[30] while throughout Italy his name is a household word.

Truthful painter of the manners of an age, reformer of the Italian stage, Goldoni, the literary glory of the Venetian Republic, is still the greatest of Italy's stage-craftsmen. His best comedies being written in dialect, his reputation suffers abroad, the Venetian speech with its elided forms and words of Spanish and Oriental origin being puzzling even to an Italian not of Venetian birth. A score or more of his comedies have been translated into English and French, yet there is not in either of these languages a single published translation of any of those Venetian plays that "do him the greatest honour,"

[30] While the author was in Venice he employed the telephone operator at his hotel to transcribe some passages from a book he had borrowed. Knowing it was to be used for a life of Goldoni in English, she refused to take any remuneration for her work, saying that she wished to do her share in making "dear Papa Goldoni" known abroad.

while only a few of his Tuscan comedies—and these not always the best—may be enjoyed by readers unfamiliar with Italian. Moreover, he wrote far too many plays for his reputation to receive its deserts; the most extensive edition of his works consisting of fifty volumes, a number to appal any but the ardent student.

No such philosopher as Molière, and no such finished poet, he painted the Venetian life about him in the colours of truth. Because they are not sufficiently elevated "above the range of every-day life," as Schlegel, who thus seeks to belittle him, declares, his characters are not of heroic stature; yet when his world is restricted to his native Venice, his interpretations of life are unexcelled in naturalistic charm. Whenever he wanders from Venice his work becomes mediocre, and even negligible. The city of the lagoons was his true *milieu,* and there, while mingling with the garrulous carnival throng, he collected his characters and his witticisms from reality, his artist's soul becoming, in the words of a fervent admirer, "the soul of a people."

Although he lived in a dissolute age, the heart of this great Venetian was untainted. In his comedies, fathers are taught kindness and sons respect; wives are told to love their husbands and their children; husbands, to be agreeable and well behaved; moreover, vice is punished and virtue rewarded in a way now deemed old-fashioned, yet none the less wholesome. To the fleetness of his observation is due the

teeming product of his fancy. He did not meditate himself, therefore he does not make us meditate; yet his characters are vivid portrayals, and his comedies of Venetian life minute and comprehensive pictures of the society of an epoch. "Lovable painter of nature," as Voltaire affectionately called him, this faithful portrayer of a bygone age remains the most wholesome example of good humour in the realm of comedy.

APPENDICES

prepared by

F. C. L. VAN STEENDEREN, PH.D.
Professor of Romance Languages
in
Lake Forest College

PREFATORY NOTE

Ernesto Masi (*Scelta di commedie di Carlo Goldoni,* Preface) says: "To classify the vast mass of Goldoni's dramatic works is very difficult. Writers and editors have tried it many times, and there is not one of these attempts that does not give rise to criticism both justifiable and justified." Philippe Monnier (*Venise au* XVIII^e *siècle,* p. 236) expresses the same idea thus: "It would be amusing to enumerate all the attempts at classification that have been made of Goldoni's comedies. Not one is satisfactory, because none is possible. You cannot emprison life in molds."

If a chronological classification is nevertheless offered here, it is because Goldonian scholarship has in recent years made such progress as to warrant another attempt, and because without it a systematic study of Goldoni's work is impossible. To assert absolute completeness for Appendix A in the face of the expressed opinion of the authorities just quoted, would merely prejudice the work in the minds of scholars; yet it is fair to state that no pains have been spared to make it complete and correct, the editions of Pasquali, Zatta, Prato, Girolamo Tasso, and the Municipality of Venice (as far as published), the Library of the British Museum, the principal libraries of Paris, and the writings of those who have worked on the subject, having been diligently searched for the purpose. Moreover, Mr. Chatfield-Taylor, in 1910, brought considerable data from Italy.

A classification according to *genres* is a different matter: that is neither so necessary, nor so feasible. A play like *La Dama prudente,* for instance, is as much a comedy of character as of manners, while in *La Locandiera* the elements of manners, character, and intrigue are so ingeniously mixed, that an attempt to disentangle them would be futile. Moreover, types such as the Miser or the *Cavaliere servente,* which Molière would present as Generalized Truth, Goldoni individualizes as does Nature herself: by mingling the traits of one type with those of other types in the same human being, as in *Il Geloso avaro;* or by spreading the characteristics of a single type among three or four individuals, as in *I Rusteghi.*

While no classification of the comedies in the categories of manners, character, intrigue, bourgeois, lachrymose, etc., has been offered, it has been deemed desirable and practicable to embody, together with the researches of Mr. Chatfield-Taylor and myself, those of Messieurs Rabany, Dejob, Maddalena, Ortolani, Musatti, Neri, Toldo, Caprin, Malamani, De Gubernatis, and others, in the matter of important resemblances among the plays, thus grouping and indicating by number, plays dealing with cicisbeism, villeggiatura; intriguing, pert, or upright women; physicians, lawyers, merchants, misers, etc. These groups have been placed under the head of sources, because, as in the case of Mirandolina in *La Locandiera* or of Géronte in *Le Bourru bienfaisant,* the finished form of a character, as Goldoni says, often "*vien da lontan sentiero*"; and because, as in the Villeggiatura series, the dramatist attacks a social foible from different angles and with increasing effi-

ciency; thus making one play in certain respects the source of another.

In regard to the sources that lie outside of Goldoni and his plays, the edition of the Municipality of Venice, when completed, may clarify and amplify a number of points. At present, however, conclusions concerning the sources of many of Goldoni's plays remain open for argument. Nor does it seem that the study of this subject has progressed to that degree of finality in which mere resemblances are rigorously separated from the sources which Goldoni actually used. For these reasons, as well as for the purpose of saving space, the authorities for the sources as given have as a rule not been indicated, although they may all be found in the Bibliography (Appendix C).

The authorities for the dates of the *premières* of the plays have, however, been given in every case, and the mention of first editions has been added as a convenient check upon their accuracy. It is probably not superfluous to point out that Goldoni says (*Mem.* II, p. 87): "J'avertis le lecteur, à cette occasion, de ne pas s'en rapporter aux dates de mes ouvrages imprimés, car elles sont presque toutes fautives," and that this warning unfortunately applies with equal force to his chronological statements in the Memoirs. The terms of the various contracts with Medebac and the Vendramins have been used to determine the number of plays to be expected at the end of each year or period during which a contract was in force, and the printing clause in the contracts with the Vendramins, together with Goldoni's correspondence, has corrected many a date as found in the Memoirs or the editions of Goldoni's plays.

In order to give a clear conception of the dramatist's activity for each year, and to avoid the subtle and debatable categories which would have to be made for plays like *La Sposa persiana, Il Terenzio, Don Giovanni Tenorio,* etc., Goldoni's theatrical works have been catalogued according to their presentation on the dramatic stage (A, 1), or the operatic stage (A, 2). A large majority of the plays in A, 1 being comedies, when a play is not differently designated, it is a comedy; and unless otherwise indicated, the comedies are in Tuscan prose, and have three acts, while the tragedies and tragi-comedies are in verse, and have five acts. Whenever the term "Ven." is used after a title, the play is either entirely or mainly in Venetian dialect. In many other comedies, however, which are essentially in the Tuscan idiom, the mask characters which appear speak dialect. In order to show the influence of the *Commedia dell' arte* over Goldoni's work, the number of mask characters in a play is indicated.

For a more detailed treatment of the plays for music (A, 2), the two brochures on the subject by Dr. Cesare Musatti, to whom my list is heavily indebted, should be consulted. The surprisingly vast number of translations from Goldoni's plays has been considered only in regard to those in English; for the translations in general Professor Maddalena's work in the *Note storiche* of the edition of the Municipality of Venice, his *Fortuna della "Locandiera,"* and *Le Traduzioni del "Ventaglio,"* are indispensable.

In conclusion I wish most cordially to express my indebtedness to Mr. Chatfield-Taylor. Not only has he collected the books and documents which I have used, but he has with untiring helpfulness given me a number of valuable suggestions.

F. C. L. v. S.

Lake Forest College.

ABBREVIATIONS

Goldoni's plays in this catalogue are indicated and referred to by means of Arabic numerals. Titles listed in italics indicate plays written for amateurs. All titles have been quoted *verbatim et literatim.* An Arabic numeral after the number of an act of a play indicates the scene referred to. When throughout the catalogue only one work of any author is quoted, his name is used to indicate it, the title appearing in this list of abbreviations, as well as in the Bibliography.

Aut.	=	Autumn season, beginning first week of Oct., and ending Dec. 15.
Bartoli	=	*Scenari inediti della commedia dell' arte.*
Bett.	=	Bettinelli's edition of Gold.'s works (See Bibliography).
Carn.	=	Carnival season, beginning Dec. 26, and ending Shrove Tuesday of year following.
Chap.	=	Chapter.
Della Torre	=	*Saggio di una bibliografia delle opere intorno a Carlo Goldoni.*
Desboulmiers	=	*Histoire anecdotique et raisonnée du théâtre italien.*
Ed.	=	Edition, or edited.
Gold.	=	Goldoni.
Grimm	=	*Correspondance littéraire, philosophique et critique adressée à un souverain d'Allemagne par le Baron de Grimm et par Diderot.*
It.	=	Italian.
Mantovani	=	*Carlo Goldoni e il teatro di San Luca a Venezia. Carteggio inedito.*
Mart.	=	Martellian verse.
Mem. I *or* II	=	*Memorie di Carlo Goldoni riprodotte integralmente dalla edizione originale francese. Con prefazione e note di Guido Mazzoni.*
Mun. of Ven.	=	*Opere complete di Carlo Goldoni edite dal Municipio di Venezia nel II centenario dalla nascita.*
Pap.	=	Paperini's edition of Gold.'s works (See Bibliography).
Pasq.	=	Pasquali's edition of Gold.'s works (See Bibliography).
Perf.	=	Performance, or performed.
Pitt.	=	Pitteri's edition of Gold.'s works (See Bibliography).
Rabany	=	*Carlo Goldoni. Le Théâtre et la vie en Italie au XVIII^e siècle.*
Sav.	=	Savioli's edition of Gold.'s works (See Bibliography).
Summ.	=	Summer season on the mainland, when Venetian theatres were closed.
Transl.	=	Translation, or translated.
Ven.	=	In Venetian dialect.

APPENDIX A

CATALOGUE OF GOLDONI'S WORKS

1.—IMPROVISED COMEDIES, COMEDIES, TRAGEDIES, AND TRAGI-COMEDIES.

1718. 1.—FIRST COMEDY. No title. Lost. Written probably at age of eleven (Pasq., vols. I & II, prefaces; Mazzoni, *Mem.* I, note to p. 30; Della Torre, p. 33).

1725. 2.—IL COLOSSO. Atellane, or satire in dialogue. Lost. (Pasq., vol. VIII, preface).

For Imer, San Samuele Theatre, Venice.

1734. 3.—BELISARIO (*Bellisario*). Tragi-comedy. Nov. 24 (*Mem.* I, p. 204; Pasq., vol. XI, p. 13; Von Löhner, *Mem.*, p. 227, note). First ed. 1738, Pisarri (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.*, p. 167). First authorized ed. 1793, vol. XXXII, Zatta.

Source: *Belisario,* tragedy perf. 1733 by Vitali troupe, Milan.

1735. 4.—ROSMONDA. Tragedy. Jan. 17 (*Mem.* I, p. 206; Pasq., vol. XIII, p. 9). First ed. 1793, vol. XXXIII, Zatta.

Sources: Muti, *La Rosimonda* (Mazzoni, *Mem.* I, p. 413). Giovanni Rucellai (1475–1525), *Rosmunda.* The Longobard legend of Alboino's death.

5.—L'ACCADEMIA LETTERAREA and a one-act improvised comedy, the title of which is unknown. Lost. An *Introduzione* to Aut., preceding Gold.'s interlude *La Fondazione di Venezia* (Pasq., vol. XIV, pp. 4 & 6).

6.—GRISELDA. Tragi-comedy, 3 acts. Written at Padua, spring; perhaps perf. at Udine, summ.; Aut. (*Mem.* I, pp. 211 & 218; Pasq., vol. XIV, p. 2; Von Löhner, *Mem.*, p. 290, note). First ed. 1777, vol. XI, Guibert and Orgeas, Turin.

Sources: Apostolo Zeno, and Pietro Pariati (1665–1733), *Griselda.* Boccaccio, *Il Decamerone,* Giorn. X, Novella 10.

1736. 7.—DON GIOVANNI TENORIO o sia IL DISSOLUTO (*Il Convitato nuovo*). Blank verse, 5 acts. Carn. till end, Feb. 14 (Von Löhner, *Mem.*, p. 303). First ed. (pirated) 1754, Bologna (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.*, p. 27; *Mem.* I, p. 223). Probably rewritten for the Pap. and later editions.

Sources: Lope de Vega, *El Dinero es quien hace hombre.* Tirso de Molina, *El Burlador de Sevilla.* Gold. acquainted with It.

transl. by Onofrio Giliberto (1652) and Giacinto Andrea Cicognini (1691) under title of *Il Convitato di pietra.* Molière, *Don Juan, ou le Festin de pierre,* and Thomas Corneille's verse rendering of it. To portray Gold.'s love affair with Passalacqua, she is represented by *Elisa,* Vitalba by *Don Giovanni,* and the author by *Carino* (Pasq., vol. XIV, p. 8., *Mem.* I, p. 216).

8.—RINALDO DI MONTALBANO (*Rinaldo nuovo*). Tragicomedy. Aut. (Pasq., vol. XV, p. 3; Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 290, note). First ed. 1774, vol. XIII, Sav.

Source: *La Povertà di Rinaldo,* improvised comedy (Pasq., vol. XV, p. 4). Bartoli, p. xlv, gives title of scenario, *Rinaldo da Montalbano,* perf. Paris, April 6, 1717.

1737. 9.—ENRICO RE DI SICILIA (*Enrico; Enrico III di Sicilia*). Tragedy. Carn. (Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 315, note), and possibly Dec. 26, 1736 (*Mem.* I, p. 229). First ed. (separate) 1740, Bett.

Source: Le Sage, *Histoire de Gil Blas,* Book IV, Chap. 4: *Le Mariage de vengeance.*

1738. 10.—L'UOMO DI MONDO (*Momolo cortesan; El Cortesan venezian*). Ven., 3 masks. An improvised comedy at first, save for one rôle. No certainty for date: Carn., Dec. 26, 1738–Feb. 10, 1739, authority being *Mem.* I, p. 232 and Pasq., vol. XV, preface. First ed. 1757, vol. X, Pap.

Sources: *Paroncin,* an improvised comedy. Boisrobert, *La Belle plaideuse.* Molière, *L'Avare.*

1739. 11.—IL PRODIGO (*Momolo sulla Brenta*). 3 masks (Momolo speaks Ven.). Aut. (Pasq., vol. XVI, p. 3, where Gold. says: "Veggendo la buona riuscita del *Momolo* dell' anno passato . . . ho pensato di fare un altro *Momolo* ancor quest' anno per il medesimo Golinetti, ed ho intitolato la nuova Commedia: *Momolo sulla Brenta o sia Il Prodigo.*").

First ed. 1757, vol. X, Pap.

Sources: Guidobaldo Benamati, *Il Prodigo ricreduto* (1652). A scenario, *Lelio prodigo,* attributed to G. B. Boccabadati (1634–96). Giorgio Giulini, *Il Prodigo* (1745). Voltaire, *L'Enfant prodigue.* Von Löhner (*Mem.,* p. 327) thinks the original for the *Prodigo* is Michele Grimani, proprietor of the San Samuele theatre. Number 11 is first comedy dealing with *Villeggiatura.*

1740. 12.—LE TRENTADUE DISGRAZIE D'ARLECCHINO. Improvised comedy written for Sacchi. Began Aut. (*Mem.* I, p. 237; Pasq., vol. XV, preface). Not printed, but seems to have become common stage property:

Bartoli, p. xlvii, mentions *Le Trentadue disgrazie di Truffaldino,* which is perhaps the same play; and ibid., p. xlvi, *Le Ventisei disgrazie d'Arlecchino,* perf. Paris, Sept. 3, 1751.

Source: G. B. Della Porta (1530–1613), *La Sorella.*

13.—CENTO E QUATTRO ACCIDENTI IN UNA NOTTE (*La Notte critica*). Improvised comedy. Aut., 2 weeks after 12

(*Mem.* I, p. 238). Bartoli, p. xlviii, mentions *I Cento e quattro accidenti succeduti nella notte istessa.* Not printed.

1741. 14.—LA BANCA ROTTA o sia IL MERCANTE FALLITO *(La Bancarotta).* 4 masks. Carn., after Gold. had gained some experience as Consul for Genoa (*Mem.* I, p. 240; Pasq., vol. XVI, p. 5). Ran till Febr. 14. First ed. 1757, vol. X, Pap.

Source: *Il Mercante fallito,* an improvised comedy.

1743. 15.—LA DONNA DI GARBO. 2 masks. Aut. (Pasq., vol. XVII, p. 4, where Gold. says:

He wrote it for the *servetta* Baccherini, gave it to the company during carn., 1743, jealousy against La Baccherini preventing its performance at that time. She died in May, and her rival, La Bastona, possessed herself of the coveted rôle.

The first comedy Gold. printed: 1747, Bergamo (Pasq., vol. IX, p. 19; Spinelli, op. cit., p. 164; Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 410).

Sources: Nolant de Fatonville, *Colombine, avocat pour et contre* (1685), and *Colombine, femme vengée* (1689). Hauteroche, *L'Esprit follet* (1684). Boisrobert, *L'Inconnue* (1646). Tirso de Molina, *Don Gil de las calzas verdes* (bef. 1618). Calderon, *La Dama duende.*

1745. 16.—IL SERVITORE DI DUE PADRONI. 4 masks. Aut. (Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 392: Sacchi, for whom it was composed in the form of a scenario, returning from Russia during the summer). Written in Pisa. First ed. 1753, vol. III, Pap.

Source: A transl. by Luigi Riccoboni of *Arlequin, valet de deux maîtres,* comedy by Jean Pierre de Ours de Mandajors, perf. Paris, July 31, 1718 *(Nouveau Mercure,* Aug., 1718; *Dictionnaire des théâtres de Paris,* 1756).

1746? 17.—IL FIGLIO D'ARLECCHINO PERDUTO E RITROVATO. Improvised comedy, partly written. After Gold. heard from Sacchi, probably aut. 1745, regarding success of 16, and before author's journey to Florence, beginning of May, 1747 (Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 399). Printed in Rasi, *I Comici italiani,* Part I, vol. I, p. 373, who translated it from Desboulmiers.

For Medebac, Sant' Angelo Theatre, Venice.

There was a preliminary agreement, signed Sept. 1747, for the theatrical year 1748–49, followed on March 10, 1749, by a contract in force from Feb. 19 of that year until the last day of Carn., 1753. Terms: Gold. to write 8 comedies and 2 operas for each theatrical year, not to write for other theatres of Venice except books for musical plays, and to accompany the troupe on its journeys to the mainland between Carn. and Aut.

1748. 18.—IL FRAPPATORE (*Tonin bella grazia*). 2 masks. Aut.
Aut. Partly written in Pisa, for Gold. gives notice of this play to D'Arbes in letter dated Pisa, Aug. 13, 1747 (Maddalena, *Nota*

storica, Mun. of Ven., vol. II, p. 77). First ed. 1757, vol. X, Pap.

Source: *Paroncin,* see 10.

19.—I DUE GEMELLI VENEZIANI. 3 masks. Aut., but possibly in Pisa, 1747 (Pap., vol. IX), or Mantua, spring, 1748 (*Mem.* I, p. 295, Act III, 17, mentions date, Jan. 14. 1746 (*more veneto* = 1747) in a marriage contract. Written for D'Arbes before Gold. met Medebac (Von Löhner, *Mem.,* p. 407, note). First ed. 1750, vol. I, Bett.

Sources: Plautus, *Menæchmi.* Regnard, *Les Ménechmes ou les jumeaux.* G. B. Della Porta, *I Due fratelli simili.* Scenarî: (Locatelli), *Le Due simile, Le Due simili di Plauto, Li Due fratelli simili;* (cod. Correr, Museo Civ., Venice), *Due Flaminie simile, Due simili con le lettere mutate;* (Scala), *Li Due vecchi gemelli, Li Due capitani simili;* etc. Also G. B. Andreini, *La Turca.* Trissino, *I Simillimi.* Firenzuola, *I Lucidi.* Aretino, *Le Due Francesche.* Bibbiena, *Calandria.* Gold. says (Pasq., vol. VIII, preface) that original of Pancrazio (who has the attributes of Tartuffe) is Dominican who fleeced him on journey to Chioggia, when expelled from Ghislieri College. (Jurisprudence), 15.

20.—L'UOMO PRUDENTE. 3 masks. Aut., after failure of 18 (*Mem.* I, p. 299), and after 19 (Malamani, *L'Ateneo veneto a C. G.,* p. 32), but possibly in Mantua, spring (Pap., vol. IV). Written in Pisa (*Mem.* I, p. 300). First ed. 1750, vol. I, Bett.

Source: (Jurisprudence), 15, 19.

Dec. 26. 21.—LA VEDOVA SCALTRA. 3 masks. Began Carn. (*Mem.* I, p. 305), but probably given to Medebac in July and perf. at Modena, Summ. (Pap., vol. 3; *Modena a C. G.,* pp. 67 & 306). First ed. 1750, vol. I, Bett.

Source: Arcangelo Spagna, *La Donna folletto ovvero le larve amorose* (ed. 1684). Hauteroche, *L'Esprit follet* (1684). Regnard, *Les Folies amoureuses.* (Cicisbeism), 20. Inspired by Mme. Medebac's acting at perf. of number 15, Leghorn, Summ., 1747.

1749. Carn. 22.—NERONE. Tragedy. Jan. (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* letter of Dec. 29, 1748, where Gold. says: "La sesta sera dell' anno prossimo venturo andrà in scena per la prima volta a Sant' Angelo"). Not printed.

23.—LA PUTTA ONORATA. Ven. (except 2 rôles), 3 masks. Carn., finishing season (*Mem.* I, p. 307). First ed. 1751, vol. II, Bett.

Source: *Le Putte di Castello,* a popular comedy. (Venetian life), 10.

24.—IL PANTALONE IMPRUDENTE. Gold. wrote a comedy with this title one year after 20; it was not perf. (Pap., vol. VII, pref. to 63). The *Diario veneto* of Jan. 14 and 15, 1765, indi-

cates a perf. of 24 (Ortolani, *Nota storica* to 61, Mim. of Ven., vol. IX). Lost.

Aut. 25.—LA BUONA MOGLIE (*La Bona mugier*). 3 masks. Oct., season opening with 21, the perf. of which was suspended by the Tribunal of the Inquisition, Nov. 15, but which had probably already stopped, owing to Chiari's parody of 21, *La Scuola delle vedove,* at the San Samuele (Malamani, *L'Ateneo veneto a C. G.,* p. 28). First ed. 1751, vol. II, Bett.

Source: 23, to which it is a sequel with same dramatis personæ.

26.—IL CAVALIERE E LA DAMA o I CICISBEI. 3 masks. Nov. 25–Dec. 15 (*Mem.* I, p. 318; Mun. of Ven., vol. III, *Nota storica,* p. 289). Had been perf. Verona, Summ. (Pasq., vol. II; Masi, *Scelta di commedie di C. G.,* vol. I). First ed. 1752, vol. III, Bett.

Sources: (Cicisbeism), 20, 21. (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20.

Dec. 26. 27.—IL PADRE DI FAMIGLIA. 3 masks when first perf.; 1 mask when first printed; none in final form (Pasq., vol. VII). Probably opens Carn., possibly given early in 1750. First ed. 1751, vol. II, Bett.

Maddalena (Mun. of Ven., vol. III, *Nota storica,* p. 185) says of 27: "Rappresentata nel sett. del '50 al Teatro del Cocomero a Firenze (v. Lami, *Novelle letterarie,* 1751, T. XII, col. 665) e nel carn. dell' anno seguente *(stile comune)* a Venezia" . . . This does not necessarily mean, though it implies, a first perf. Its successor, *L'Avvocato veneziano (Mem.* I, p. 363), had already been mentioned in the pref. to the Bettinelli ed. (1750); Malamani, op. cit., p. 28, places 27 in the theatrical year 1749–50; lastly, if it had been first perf. in Venice during Carn. 1751, there would have been 17, not 16, new comedies in 1750–51.

Sources: Character of Ottavio suggested by same Dominican as was that of Pancrazio in 19. For alleged plagiarism in Diderot's *Père de famille,* see Toldo, *Se il D. abbia imitato il G.,* and Pasq., vol. VII, p. 165. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26.

28.—GIUSTINO. Tragedy. Date unknown, but mentioned by Gold. in the *Prefazione dell' autore premessa all' Edizione di Venezia MDCCL e a quella di Firenze MDCCLIII* (Pasq., vol. I, p. 14). First ed. 1793, vol. XXXII, Zatta.

1750. Carn. 29.—L'AVVOCATO VENEZIANO. 1 mask; protagonist speaks Ven. Carn., following 27 (*Mem.* I, p. 363; Malamani, op. cit., p. 28). First ed. 1752; vol. III, Bett.

Sources: (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26. Law case in 29 proposed by Gold. in 1732, in the Academy of Doctor Ortolani of Venice (Pasq., vol. X, p. 9).

30.—LA FAMIGLIA DELL' ANTIQUARIO o sia LA SUOCERA E LA NUORA. 4 masks. Carn. (A. & A. Spinelli, *Let-*

tere di C. G. e di G. Medebach al conte Arconati-Visconti, p. 59; Malamani, op. cit., p. 28). First ed. 1752, vol. III, Bett.

Sources: Iacopo Angelo Nelli, *La Suocera e la nuora* (Landau, *Geschichte der ital. Litter.;* Maddalena, *Intorno alla Famiglia dell'antiquario;* Malamani, op. cit.) Original of the antiquary is Antonio de' Capitani of Mantua, mentioned by Casanova in his Memoirs, vol. II, p. 59 (Valeri, *Intorno a una commedia di Gold.).* (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27.

31.—L'EREDE FORTUNATA. 1 mask, first form 3 masks. End of Carn., but not the last night, when 23 and 25 were given (*Mem.* I, p. 324; Malamani, op. cit., p. 30). First ed. 1752, vol. III, Bett.

Sources: Molière, *Le Cocu imaginaire.* (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29.

The Sixteen Comedies. At the end of the perf. (Feb. 10, 1750), referred to under 31, Gold. promised in a sonetto recited by the prima donna, "una (commedia) a la settimana per almanco" for the theatrical year 1750–51. In act I, 2 of *Il Teatro comico* (32) Placida mentions 16 titles of comedies, but though in the dialogue preceding the list it is stated on two occasions that Gold. had written them, they were not all in existence on Oct. 5, 1750, when the new Venetian season began. During the summer at Mantua and Milan Gold. wrote only seven of the 16 (Malamani *L'Ateneo veneto a C. G.*), and that is all he brought with him to Venice. On the last Sunday but one before the end of the theatrical year (Carn., 1751), Gold. had not even the subject for the 16th and last of the series: *I Pettegolezzi delle donne* (*Mem.* I, p. 355). The first ed. of 32 was issued after April 24, 1751, (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* p. 21), and Gold., therefore, had time to suit the printed list to the facts as they had occurred, although there is evidence (*Mem.* I., p. 352) that on Oct. 5, 1750, he gave several titles to which he wrote comedies during the year.

Comparing the list of 16 titles in 32 with the list in *Mem.* I., p. 327, we see 1°, that the latter gives only 15 titles; 2° that the former has *I Poeti (Il Poeta fanatico),* and *Il Vero amico,* which the latter omits; 3°, that the latter mentions *La Famiglia dell' antiquario* (30). This play is mentioned in 32, but not in the list of 16; act I, 9 refers to it under its sub-title, *La Suocera e la nuora,* as already performed and known. Besides, the *Sonetto* of Feb. 10, 1750 (Malamani, op. cit., p. 32.) includes it among the comedies performed during the season then ending. Again, the Paperini ed., vol. IV, gives its date as Venice, Carn., 1749 (theatrical year). Number 30, therefore, does not belong to the 16 comedies.

The Complimento, first published by Foffano *(Nuovo Archivio Veneto,* vol. XVIII, p. 227) in 1899, though recited by Mme. Medebac at end of Carn. 1751, mentions the 16 titles of *Il Teatro comico* in the order given in that play. Its 21st stanza, however, refers to an *Arlecchino finto moreto.* This is, as Malamani points out, evidently an improvised comedy, performed in another Venetian theatre at the time when *La Donna volubile* (46) was failing and for which the public was leaving the Sant'

Angelo theatre, as the text of the stanza abundantly shows. Maddalena in *Una diavoleria di titoli e di cifre* suggests that *Arlecchino finto moreto* was but another title for 30; yet, this would lead to the conclusion that 30 belongs to the 16 comedies, or that 17, not 16, new plays were given by Gold. during the theatrical year 1750–51.

The list in Gold.'s memoirs being manifestly in error, and the list in *Il Teatro comico* being supported by the *Complimento* above mentioned, the second list is here chosen as authority.

Aut. 32.—IL TEATRO COMICO (Part of 2d and 3d acts is occupied by a farce, *Il Padre rivale del figlio*). 4 masks "in statu naturæ." Oct. 5 (Gradenigo, *Notatorj*), but first at Milan, Summ. (Mun. of Ven., vol. IV, *Nota storica* to 32). First ed. 1751, vol. II, Bett.

Sources: Molière, *La Critique de l' école des femmes, L'Impromptu de Versailles.* Number 5, of A, 1; and 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 of A, 4. (Actors), 14.

33.—LE FEMMINE PUNTIGLIOSE (*I Puntigli delle donne*). 3 masks. Oct. 10 (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 13), but first at Mantua, April 18 (Vol. VI, Bett. 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: Molière, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme.* Dancourt, *Le Chevalier à la mode, Les Bourgeoises.* Hauteroche, *Les Bourgeoises de qualité.* D'Allainval, *L'Ecole des bourgeois.* G. B. Fagiuoli, *La Nobiltà vuol richezze ovvero il Conte di Bucotondo* (1734). G. C. Becelli, *La Pazzia delle pompe* (1748). Nelli, *La Moglie in calzoni* (1727). (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30.

34.—LA BOTTEGA DEL (DI, DA) CAFFÈ (*Il Maldicente alla bottega del caffè*). First Ven., later Tuscan; first with 2 masks, later with none. Oct., but first in Mantua, May 2 (Vol. IV, Bett., 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: Destouches, *Le Médisant.* Gresset, *Le Méchant.* Gold.'s interlude of same title. Voltaire has probably imitated 34 in *Le Café ou L'Ecossaise,* Lessing in *Minna von Barnhelm,* Albergati in his *Ciarlator maldicente.* (Gaming), 25.

35.—IL BUGIARDO. 4 masks. Aut., but first in Mantua, May 23 (Medebac in vol. IV, Bett., 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: Pierre Corneille, *Le Menteur, Suite du Menteur.* Alarcon, *La Verdad sospechosa.* Romagnesi, *La Feinte inutile.* Maddalena suggests that serenade in Act I, 1 may be that sung by Agnese Amurat in 1732 under the windows of the aunt and her niece, to whom Gold. was paying court simultaneously (Mun. of Ven., vol. IV, *Nota storica;* Mem. I, p. 150).

36.—L'ADULATORE. 3 masks. Aut., but first in Mantua, spring (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* p. 23). First ed. 1753, vol. IV, Bett.

Sources: J. B. Rousseau, *Le Flatteur.* Molière, *Tartuffe,* and *L'Avare.* (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33.

37.—IL POETA FANATICO (*I Poeti, Le Gare fra i poeti*). Verse and prose, 2 masks. Aut., but first at Milan, Sep. 5 (Pap., vol. VIII). First ed. 1753, vol. VII, Bett.

In letter to Vendramin, Bologna, Aug. 21, 1759 (Mantovani), Gold. describes as last of 9 plays he promises for 1759–60, a play over which *Polymnia,* the Muse of rhetoric, shall preside. "It will be written in *versi liberi,* now in blank, than in rhymed verse; now in *terzetti,* then in Martellian lines." This description tallies with the form of 37 as printed in vol XX, Zatta. Mantovani calls the projected play *Il Poeta fanatico.* There is no record of this title among the plays given in 1759–60 or after.

Sources: Girolamo Baruffaldi, *Il Poeta* (1734). Desmarets de Saint-Sorlin, *Les Visionnaires* (1637), transl. into It. by Pellegrino Rossi (1737). Luisa Bergalli, *Le Avventure del poeta* (1730). Piron, *Le Métromanie* (for Damis). Molière, *Le Misanthrope* (for Oronte), and *Les Femmes savantes* (for Vadius and Trissotin).

38.—PAMELA NUBILE (*La Pamela, Pamela putta, Pamela fanciulla*). Aut., but first at Milan, summ. (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* p. 23). First ed. 1753, vol. V, Bett.

Gold. says: "Provai una Commedia senza le Maschere, e questa fu la *Pamela*; vidi che non dispiacque, ed io ne feci alcun' altre, felici tutte egualmente." (Pasq., vol. II, p. 10). See, however, number 7 and *Mem.* I, p. 221.

Pamela is last among the 16 comedies, written at Mantua or Milan.

Sources: Richardson, *Pamela,* of which It. transl. was printed by Bett. in 1744–45. Voltaire, *Nanine,* but Merz (p. 36) denies this source. (Foreigners), 21.

39.—IL CAVALIERE DI BUON GUSTO (*L'Uomo di gusto*). 4 masks. Dec. 11 (Spinelli, op. cit., p. 24). First ed. 1753, vol. VI, Bett.

Sources: Molière, *Don Juan, ou le Festin de pierre.* (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36. (Gold.'s ideal of a man of the world: Mun. of Ven., vol. V, *Nota storica* to 39), 10, 11.

40.—IL GIUOCATORE. 3 masks. End of Aut. (Malamani, *L'Ateneo veneto a C. G.,* p. 41). First ed. 1754, vol. V, Pap.

Sources: Regnard, *Le Joueur.* Luigi Riccoboni, *Il Giuocatore,* scenario perf. Paris, 1718. (Gaming), 25, 34. Also Gold.'s experience with young Paduan who, in 1730, on boat to and at Ferrara cheated him at *Cala Carte* and at *Bassetta* (Pasq., vol. IX). Act III, 2 of play harks back to night Gold. spent playing *Bassetta* at Padua in 1731, when next morning he came up for examination for degree of Doctor of Law. Having lost all his money, he pawned diamond pin the lady he then courted had given him. Similarly, Florindo pawns Rosaura's jewel (Pasq., vol. X, p. 6).

Dec. 26. 41.—IL VERO AMICO. First with masks. Dec. 26 (Malamani, ibid.). First ed., 1753, vol. IV, Pap.

Sources: Plautus, *Aulularia.* Molière, *L'Avare, Les Femmes savantes.* Luigi Riccoboni, *La Force de l'amitié,* scenario perf. Paris, 1717. Flaminio Scala, *Il Fido amico,* scenario. Boccaccio, *Il Decamerone,* Giorn. X, Novella 8. For question of Diderot's plagiarism in *Le Fils naturel* from this play, see Gold.'s denial in Pasq., vol. VII, and Maddalena in Mun. of Ven., vol. V.

1751. Carn. 42.—LA FINTA AMMALATA (*Lo Speciale o sia la Finta ammalata, Lo Speciale balordo*). 1 mask. Carn. (List in 32, Act I, 2). First ed. 1753, vol. IV, Pap.

Sources: Molière, *L'Amour médecin.* Cecchi, *La Finta ammalata.* Protagonist a portrait of Mme. Medebac.

43.—LA DAMA PRUDENTE (*La Donna prudente*). Carn. (List in 32, Act I, 2). First ed. 1753, vol. VII, Pap.

Sources: A. G. Brignole Sale, *Geloso non geloso.* J. A. Nelli, *Il Geloso disinvolto.* Campistron, *Le Jaloux désabusé.* (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39.

44.—L'INCOGNITA PERSEGUITATA (*L'Incognita, L'Incognita perseguitata dal bravo impertinente*). 3 masks. Carn. (List in 32). First ed. 1754, vol. VIII, Pap.

Source: See *Mem.* I, p. 352.

45.—L'AVVENTURIERE ONORATO. Guglielmo first a Pantaloon, and his rôle in Ven. (Pap. vol. III). Feb. 13 (Vol. V, Bett., 1753, which is first ed.).

Source: Goldoni's life. (Physicians), 42. (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29, 31.

46.—LA DONNA VOLUBILE. 3 masks. Feb. (see 45). First ed. 1755, vol. VIII, Pap.

Sources: Destouches, *L'Irrésolu.* For Act I, 13, Molière, *Don Juan, ou le Festin de pierre* (Act II, 5 & 6); see also *L'Ecole des femmes, L'Ecole des maris.* The capricious actress Caterina Landi.

47.—I PETTEGOLEZZI DELLE DONNE. Ven., 2 masks. Ends Carn., Feb. 23, being last of the 16 comedies. First ed. 1753, Vol. V, Bett.

Source: See *Mem.* I, p. 355. (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34.

Aut. 48.—IL MOLIERE. Mart. (1st time), 5 acts. Oct. 4, but first in Turin, Aug. 28 (Bett., vol. IV, 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: Grimarest, *La Vie de M. de Molière.* Anonymous, *La Fameuse comédienne, ou Histoire de la Guérin, auparavant femme et veuve de Molière.* Molière, *Tartuffe.* Gigli, *La Sorellina di Don Pilone.*

49.—LA CASTALDA. 3 masks. Oct. First ed. 1753; vol. VII, Bett.

In Pap., vol. VII, preface to *La Donna vendicativa* (63), Gold. mentions in their order 40 comedies and libretti written for Medebac under contract of 1749. There 49 follows *Il Moliere,* of which date is certain. In Pap., vol. VIII, however, date of 49 is given as Aut., 1752. In *Mem.* I, p. 382, Gold. says he gave it to Medebac at end of Carn., 1753. See *Mem.* II, p. 87. Authority adopted nearest the event.

Source: (Villeggiatura), 11. Written to fit the *servetta* Maddalena Marliani.

50.—L'AMANTE MILITARE. 3 masks. Aut. (Pap., vol. V; preface to 63—see note to 49—confirms). First ed. 1755, vol. V, Pap.

Source: See *Mem.* I, p. 177, et seq.; p. 186 et seq., and p. 256 et seq.

1752. Carn. 51.—IL TUTORE. 3 masks. Jan. 4 (Bett., vol. V, 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: Dufresny, *Le Négligent.* Gold.'s interlude, *La Pupilla.*

52.—LA MOGLIE SAGGIA (*Il Trionfo della prudenza in Rosaura moglie amorosa, La Moglie amorosa*). 3 masks. Carn. (Preface to 63; Ded. to *La Serva amorosa*—55—,Pap., vol. I, p. 319). First ed. 1753, vol. VI, Bett.

Sources: Chiari, *La Moglie saggia,* in its turn imitated from 26. G. A. Costantini, *La Dama ossia la Saggia moglie* (1751). Molière's process of having valets repeat scenes enacted between their masters. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43.

53.—IL FEUDATARIO (*Il Marchese di Monte Fosco*). 2 masks. Feb. 7 (Bett., vol. VII, 1753, which is first ed.).

Source: See Pasq., vol. XVI, preface.

54.—LE DONNE GELOSE. Ven., 1 mask. Feb. 12, ending Carn. (Bett., vol. VI, 1753, which is first ed.).

Sources: (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40.

Aut. 55.—LA SERVA AMOROSA. 3 masks. Oct.,* but first at Bologna, spring (Pasq., vol. III, p. 73; Neri, *Aneddoti gold.,* p. 78). First ed. 1753, vol. I, Pap.

Sources: Molière, *Le Malade imaginaire.* J. A. Nelli, *La Moglie in calzoni.* Basilio Locatelli, *Il Vecchio avaro overo li scritti,* scenario not later than 1618. (Stepmothers), 27.

56.—I PUNTIGLI DOMESTICI. 4 masks. Oct., but first in Milan, summ. (Preface to 63, Pap.). First ed. 1754, vol. VI, Pap.

Sources: Racine, *Les Plaideurs.* (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29, 31, 45. (Domestic quarrels), 30, 39, 47.

57.—LA FIGLIA OBBEDIENTE. 3 masks. Aut. (Pasq., vol. VIII). First ed. 1754, vol. VI, Pap.

* Gold.'s letter, Oct. 7, 1752 (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi*): "Martedì si aprirono li Teatri. Al nostro di Sant' Angelo si diede principio con il *Tutore,* e la seconda sera si pose in scena la *Serva amorosa,* la quale si seguita tuttavia a rappresentarsi . . ."

Source: (Actors), 14, 32.

58.—I MERCANTI (*I Due Pantaloni, I Mercatanti*). First with 4 masks, later with none. Probably Dec. 26 (Pasq., vol. IX). First ed. 1754, vol. V, Pap.

Sources: The Pantaloon Collalto's ability, he playing both father and son in 58. (Commerce), 14, 26. (Avarice), 41. (Physicians), 42, 45. (Foreigners), 21, 38.

1753. Carn. 59.—LA LOCANDIERA (*Gli Amanti in locanda, Il Cavaliere di Ripafratta o sia il Marchese di Forlipopoli*). Jan. (In Act I, 9 the Cav. reads letter dated Jan. 1, 1753). First ed. 1753, vol. II, Pap.

Sources: Marivaux, *La Surprise de l'amour, Les Serments indiscrets.* Molière, *La Princesse d'Elide.* Development of Mirandolina traceable through 11, 15, 21, 37, 49, 50, 56.

60.—LE DONNE CURIOSE. 3 masks. Carn. (*Mem.* I, p. 382). First ed. 1753, vol. IV, Pap.

Sources: See Masi, *Scelta* etc., vol. I, p. 455 et seq., and Maddalena, *Nota storica,* vol. IX, Mun. of Ven. Francesco Grisellini, *I Liberi muratori* (1652). (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52.

61.—IL CONTRATTEMPO o sia IL CHIACCHIERONE IMPRUDENTE (*L'Imprudente, L'Uomo imprudente*). 2 masks. Carn., ending March 6. First ed. 1754, vol. VIII, Pap.

See *Mem.* I, p. 382. But pref. to 63, vol. VII, Pap. (note to 49) gives 61 as part of the ten works for this year (see contract). Its performance followed that of 60 under title of *L'Uomo imprudente.* Date in first ed.: Carn., 1752, is *more veneto,* or theatrical year 1752–53. Zatta date: Aut., 1757, is out of the question, since Gold. states in first ed. that he rewrote 61 in 1754.

Sources: Eight scenarî derived from Nicolo Barbieri (Beltrame), *Inavertito overo Scappino disturbato e Mezzetino travagliato* (Emilio Re, in *Rivista teatrale,* 1910), from which Molière derived *L'Etourdi ou le contretemps.* Luigi Riccoboni, *Le Sincère à contretemps,* Paris, 1717. Molière, *L'Ecole des femmes, L'Ecole des maris.*

62.—IL SENSALE DI MATRIMONI. Before April 28. Lost.

Lettera dell' avvocato Carlo Goldoni ad un suo amico in Venezia, Florence, April 28, 1753, printed as announcement to Pap. (Urbani de Gheltof, *Lettere di C. G.;* Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 25, note): "*I Poeti* principalmente è una commedia che non sta, non si può stampare. *La Donna volubile, Il Sensale di matrimoni* non possono correre assolutamente così."

Aut. 63.—LA DONNA VENDICATIVA. 1 mask. Aut. (Maddalena, Mun. of Ven., vol. IX, *Nota storica*). First ed. 1754, vol. VII, Pap.

Maddalena (ibid.) seems to disprove Gold.'s statement in *Mem.* I, p. 382 by means of preface to 63. Not counting 24, 28, and 62, for obvious reasons, this catalogue presents a corroborated record of forty-three plays given by Goldoni to Medebac in the five years of his connection with the Sant' Angelo. Supposing that the agreement of Sept. 1747 called for eight plays during the first year, Goldoni contracted to write forty plays for Medebac. He presented the manager, therefore, with three plays, as he says in the Memoirs.

Sources: J. A. Nelli, *La Serva padrona* (1731). G. A. Federico, *La Serva padrona* (1733), an interlude. Written for the *servetta* Maddalena Marliani, who had also inspired 49, 55, 56, 59, 60.

For the Brothers Vendramin, San Luca Theatre, Venice.

The first contract, with Antonio, in force from first day of Lent, 1753, calls for 8 plays a year; the second, with Francesco, applying from March 1, 1757, demands 6 plays annually, but allows 9; the third, with Francesco, dated March 2, 1762, covering Gold.'s stay in France "per il corso di anni due circa," requires such original comedies as he is able to send. All forbid Gold.'s writing comedies for theatres in Venice other than the San Luca, and his publishing them before three years shall have passed after their first performance (Mantovani).

1753. Aut. 64.—IL GELOSO AVARO. 2 masks, the Dottore and Arlecchino being present also, but in modified form. Oct. (Pasq., vol. XII, p. 186), but first in Leghorn, spring (Pitt., vol. I, 1757, which is first ed.).

Sources: Molière, *L'Avare.* (Avarice), 41, 58. (Jealousy), 30, 33, 43, 54. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60. See Pasq., ibid., or *Mem.* II, p. 4.

65.—LA DONNA DI TESTA DEBOLE o sia LA VEDOVA INFATUATA (*L'Uomo sincero*). 2 masks, Dottore and Arlecchino as in 64. Aut., but first in Leghorn, Summ. (Pitt., vol. I, 1757, which is first ed.). First play written for San Luca (ibid.).

Sources: Molière, *Les Femmes savantes, Le Misanthrope.* Fatonville, *La Fille savante.* J. A. Nelli, *La Dottoressa preziosa.*

66.—LA SPOSA PERSIANA. Tragi-comedy, Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Pitt., vol. I; Pasq., vol. XIII). Ran 32 or 34 nights (Pasq., vol. XVII or XIII). Third play written for San Luca. First ed. 1757, vol. I, Pitt.

Source: *A History of Modern Times or Present State of All Nations,* London, 1731 (*Mem.* II, p. 6).

67.—LA CAMERIERA BRILLANTE. 3 masks. Follows 66 (*Mem.* II, p. 22); may open Carn. (Pitt., vol. II; Zatta, vol. XX). First ed. 1757, vol. II, Pitt.

Sources: Guelette, *Les Comédiens par hazard,* Paris, 1718. A. Passanti (ed.), *La Commedia in commedia,* in the *Zibaldone*

comico, etc. (Ms.). (Villeggiatura), 11, 49. (Serva padrona), 49, 63.

68.—LA MASCHERA. Scenario in part. 1753 (*Mem.* II, p. 354). Lost.

1754. 69.—IL FILOSOFO INGLESE. Mart., 5 acts. Jan. 4 (Ziliotto,
Carn. *C. G. e l'Istria;* Neri, *Aneddoti gold.*, p. 74, note). First ed. 1757, vol. I, Pitt.

Source: Addison, etc., *The Spectator.* It. transl. (Venice, 1752) of Elizabeth Haywood's French transl., *La Spectatrice.* (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58.

70.—IL VECCHIO BIZZARRO (*Il Cortesan vecchio*). 3 masks. Carn. (Pasq., vol. XVII, p. 155). First ed. 1757, vol. II, Pitt.

Sources: (Man of the world), 10, 11, 39.

71.—IL FESTINO. Mart., 5 acts. Ends Carn. (Pitt., vol. II, 1757, which is first ed.). Changed to prose for Tordinona theatre, Rome (Mun. of Ven., vol. XV, p. 271).

Sources: Molière, *Critique de l'école des femmes.* See Pasq., vol. XVII, p. 154, and *Mem.* II, p. 34. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64.

Summ. 72.—*L'IMPOSTORE.* 4 masks. Written at Modena for Father Giambattista Roberti, Summ. (Bonfanti, *La Data dell' Impostore;* Maddalena, Mun. of Ven., vol. XI, p. 199). First ed. 1754, vol. VII, Pap.

Sources: (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29, 31, 45, 56. (Militarism), 50. Pasq., vol. XVII, p. 6, and *Mem.* I, p. 248.

Aut. 73.—LA MADRE AMOROSA. 3 masks. Oct., but first in Genoa, spring (Pitt., vol. III, or Mun. of Ven., vol. XI: *Introduzione per la prima recita d'autunno 1754*).

Ready for Carn. of preceding season, but postponed owing to quarrel between prima donna Gandini and servetta Bresciani over principal rôle.

Source: Nivelle de la Chausée and the "comédie larmoyante."

74.—IL TERENZIO. Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Letter from Gasparo Gozzi, Nov. 2, 1754, in Mun. of Ven., vol. XI, p. 392). First ed. 1758, vol. III, Pitt.

Sources: Pitisco, *Lexicon antiquitatum romanorum.* Moréri, *Dictionnaire historique.* It. transl. of Terence by Luisa Bergalli (1739), or Nicolò Fortiguerri (1748). Regnard, *Démocrite.* Molière, *Amphitrion.* (Lives of authors), 48.

75.—LA PERUVIANA. Tragi-comedy, Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi*, p. 33; Pasq., vol. XV, p. 159). First ed. 1757, vol. III, Pitt.

Source: Françoise Graffigny, *Les Lettres d'une Péruvienne.*

1755. 76.—IL TORQUATO TASSO. Mart., 5 acts. Carn. (Spinelli,
Carn. op. cit.; Pacq., vol. XVI; Pitt., vol. III, 1757, which is first ed.).

Sources: Moréri, *Dictionnaire historique.* See preface to 76. (Lives of authors), 48, 74.

77.—IL CAVALIERE GIOCONDO (*I Viaggiatori*). Mart., 5 acts. Carn. (Spinelli, ibid; Pitt., vol. IV, 1758, which is first ed.).

Sources: Scipione Maffei, *Raguet.* J. A. Nelli, *Il Viaggiatore affettato.* Bartoli, *I Viaggiatori,* scenario, Paris, 1754. Molière, *Georges Dandin, Le Bourgeois gentilhomme.* (Struggle between bourgeoisie and aristocracy), 30, 33, 38, 59. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71.

78.—LE MASSERE (*Le Massare*). Ven., Mart., 5 acts. Ends Carn., Feb. 11 (Mun. of Ven., vol. XII, p. 216). First ed. 1758, vol. IV, Pitt.

Two plays less than full quota for 1754–55. Gold. says (*Mem.* II, p. 31): "Je revins à Venise avec assez de matériaux pour l'année comique 1754, et je fis l'ouverture par une pièce intitulée *La Villeggiatura.*" And ibid., p. 71: "Je fis succéder à celle-ci (*La Peruviana*) une comédie en prose, intitulée *Un Curioso accidente.*" But in letter of Apr. 5, 1755 (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi*) he says: "L'Anno scorso è stato per me non poco calamitoso. Ne ha risentito anche il Teatro mio, poichè in luogo d'otto commedie cinque sole ho potuto farne." He then mentions 74, 75, 76, 77, 78. This statement corroborated in preface to 46 (Pap.): "Egli è vero che in quest' anno, a causa delle malattie sudette . . . cinque Commedie solo, in luogo delle otto promesse, mi riusci di compire."

Sources: The Latin *Tabernicæ.* Sophron, *Mimes.* J. A. Nelli, *Le Serve al forno.* (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54.

Summ. 79.—*LA FIERA.* Bagnoli, district of Padua, for Count Widiman (*Mem.* II, p. 50). Lost.

80.—I MALCONTENTI. Summ., Verona (Gold.'s letter, Aug. 3, 1755, Mantovani).

Intended for Aut., but vetoed by the Censors as it contained an attack on Chiari (Mantovani, Letter II). Not perf. in Venice (ibid., Vendramin on Dec. 30, 1758): "Fu impedita in altro tempo la recita de' *Malcontenti* . . . e fu a loro credere un effetto di politica prudenza." Maddalena (Mun. of Ven., vol. XII) finds first trace of a perf. after Verona at Modena in 1759.

First ed. 1758, vol. IV, Pitt.

Sources: (Villeggiatura), 11, 49, 67. (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29, 31, 45, 56, 72.

Aut. 81.—LA BUONA FAMIGLIA. Opens Aut. (Mantovani, Letter II). One perf. (Neri, *Aneddoti,* p. 8). First ed. 1758, vol. IV, Pitt.

Sources: (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77.

82.—LE DONNE DI CASA SOA (*Le Donne casalinghe*). Ven., Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Mantovani, p. 74; Pitt., vol. V, 1758, which is first ed.).

Sources: J. A. Nelli, *La Moglie in calzoni.* Fagiuoli, *Il Marito alla moda.* Gorino Corio, *Il Frippon francese colla dama alla moda.* (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78. (Bourgeois virtue), 20, 27, 54, 58, 73, 81.

83.—IRCANA IN JULFA. Tragi-comedy, Mart. Aut. (Mantovani, letter of Aug. 3, 1755; *Mem.* II, p. 14; Pasq., vol. XIII, p. 25). First ed. 1758, vol. V, Pitt.

Source: Number 66, to which it is a sequel.

84.—LA VILLEGGIATURA. Dec. (Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, note to p. 53). First ed. 1758, vol. V, Pitt.

First ed. and Zatta give Carn. 1756. Maddalena, assigning no date, says: "Quanto sia vissuta questa *Villeggiatura* sotto l'egide dell' autore non si sa" (Mun. of Ven., vol. XIII). Mazzoni (*Mem.* II) gives no authority, unless in the note to p. 52 where Gold. is shown to have 4 plays ready in Dec. 1755. Page 52 reads: "Après cette Pièce en vers (77), j'en donnai une qui, malgré le désavantage de la prose, etc. . . . Vous verrez, mon cher lecteur, qu'en vous donnant, dans le Chapitre vingt-septième [read 23me], l'extrait d'une Comédie intitulée *la Partie de Campagne* (84), je dis que j'avais trois autres Pièces sur le même sujet, et en voici les titres." Goldoni then mentions *Le Smanie —, Le Avventure —, Il Ritorno dalla villeggiatura.* The prose play which he places after 77 is, therefore, not 84, as Mazzoni seems to think, but *Le Smanie della Villeggiatura* (127).

Of 80, which was vetoed by the Censors, Gold. says: "La commedia non si perderà per questo. Cambierò quell' episodio, che feriva il Chiari, in un altro ridicolo, che non sarà fuor di proposito; e basta, che la commedia si faccia dentro l'autunno, perchè sia l'argomento suo alla stagione adattato" (Mantovani, p. 74). Now, as Rabany points out, *Le Smanie* is but a "réplique" of 80. If 80 finally passed the Censors in Aut. 1755, it was in the form of *Le Smanie,* not in that of 84, which it does not resemble.

Chapter XXVII (*Mem.* II), which is a résumé of *Le Smanie,* ends thus: "C'est le sujet principal de la seconde Pièce." The next chapter begins: "La suite de *la Manie de la Campagne* que je donnai une année après la première, est intitulée *les Aventures de la Campagne.*" The Memoirs, then, place 84 in Aut. 1754, and *Le Smanie* in Aut. 1755. Furthermore, chapter XXX opens thus: "Ayant rapproché l'abrégé de[s] trois Pièces, qui avoient été données dans trois années différentes," . . . a statement Gold. had made some 20 years earlier in Pasq., vol. XI, p. 100: "Queste tre Commedie . . . sono state separatemente rappresentate con una distanza di qualche tempo dall'una all' altra . . . Poteva io dunque per la stessa ragione separarle ne' Tomi della mia novella edizione." The 3 numbers, then, of the *villeggiatura* trilogy Gold. places at three different dates.

Mazzoni seems to destroy those dates by quoting the *Introduzione alle recite autunnali del 1761.* It proves that *Le Smanie—, Le Avventure—,* and *Il Ritorno dalla villeggiatura* were perf. Aut. 1761. But if we consider the last two lines:

"Nella terza Commedia *allor* noi pure.
Della villa il ritorno avrem studiato."

in connection with the words *fin ora* of the 2d line, and with the 5th line:

"Vien l'argomento da lontan sentiero,"

the quotation seems to prove only that *Il Ritorno dalla villeggiatura* was first perf. Aut. 1761, *Le Smanie* and *Le Avventure* being merely repeated then.

Sources: (Villeggiatura), 11, 49, 67, 80. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77, 81. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54.

1756. Carn. 85.—IL RAGGIRATORE. Jan. 10 (Gradenigo, *Cod. 67,* Museo Correr; his *Notatorj,* Jan. 19, 1756: Mun. of Ven., vol. XIII, pp. 285 & 198). One perf. (Neri, *Aneddoti,* p. 6). First ed. 1758 (sic.), vol. III, Pitt.

Sources: Destouches, *Le Glorieux.* (Jurisprudence), 15, 19, 20, 26, 29, 31, 45, 56, 72, 80.

86.—LA DONNA STRAVAGANTE. Mart., Carn. (Gradenigo, ibid.; Gasparo Gozzi in letter Feb. 11, 1756: *Scritti di G. G., scelti ed ord. da Tommaseo,* vol. III). First ed. 1760, vol. VI, Pitt.

Sources: (Pert women), 11, 15, 21, 37, 49, 50, 56, 59, 60, 63, 67.

87.—IL CAMPIELLO. Ven., verse. Feb. 20 (Gradenigo, ibid.). First ed. 1758 (sic), vol. V, Pitt.

Sources: (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78, 82.

88.—*L'AVARO.* 1 act. Bologna, Carn. (Pasq., vol. IV, Maddalena in vol. XIII, Mun. of Ven. commenting: "se l'edizione Pasquali non erra;" see *Mem.* II, p. 139). First ed. 1762, vol. IV, Pasq.

In first ed., p. 238, Gold. states that 88 was written for Albergati; in Ded. of vol. X, Pitt., Gold. says that it was for a certain "compagnia di Dame e di Cavalieri," not connected with Albergati's private theatre.

Sources: Molière, *L'Avare.* (Avarice), 41, 58, 64.

Aut. 89.—L'AMANTE DI SÈ MEDESIMO (*L'Amante di sè stesso o l'Egoista*). Mart., 5 acts. Oct. (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* Letter Oct. 9, 1756), but first in Milan, Sept. (Preface to 89). First ed. 1760, vol. VI, Pitt.

Sources: J. J. Rousseau, *Narcisse, ou l'amant de lui-même.* (Egoism), 41, 54, 88.

90.—IL MEDICO OLANDESE. Mart., 5 acts. Before Oct. 30 (Spinelli, op. cit., Letter Oct. 30, 1756). First ed. 1760, vol. VI, Pitt.

Sources: See *Mem.* II, p. 79. Doctor Boerhave represented by Mons. Bainer, Gold. by Mons. Guden, *Polacco ipocondriaco.*

(Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69. (Physicians), 42, 45, 58. (Neurasthenics), 51 (*Ottavio*), 89 (*Don Mauro*).

91.—IRCANA IN ISPAHAN (*Ircana in Ispaan*). Tragi-comedy, Mart., 5 acts. Between Oct. 30 and Dec. 14 (Spinelli, op. cit., Letters of these dates; Pasq., vol. XII, p. 184). First ed. 1760, vol. VI, Pitt.

Sources: Numbers 66, 83, to which it is a sequel.

92.—IL BUON COMPATRIOTTO. Scenario in part, 3 masks. 1756 (*Mem.* II, p. 354). First ed. 1790, vol. XV, Zatta.

1757. Carn. 93.—LA DONNA SOLA. Mart., 5 acts. Jan. 4 (Gradenigo, *Notatorj;* Pitt., vol. III, pref. to 85*). First ed. 1761, vol. VII, Pitt.

Sources: See *Mem.* II, p. 117. (Pert women), 11, 15, 21, 37, 49, 50, 56, 59, 60, 63, 67, 86.

94.—LA PUPILLA. Sdruccioli verse, 5 acts. Written in 1756; not perf. in Venice until 1830 (Mun. of Ven., vol. XIV, p. 253). First ed. 1757, vol. X, Pap.

Sources: Molière, *L'Ecole des maris.* Dancourt, *Le Tuteur.* Regnard, *Les Folies amoureuses.* Fagiuoli, *Ciapo tutore.* Gold.'s interlude, *La Pupilla.* Ariosto's and Trissino's style.

95.—UN CURIOSO ACCIDENTE. Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 71, where it is placed between 75 and 96, and in close proximity to 90). First ed. 1764–68, vol. VII, Pasq.

Relative order of 95, 96, and 97 in Memoirs, Pasq., and Zatta is the same. Both Pasq. and Zatta were under Gold.'s supervision, and Pasq. gives one hitherto unpublished play each vol. It is certain that 96 comes before March, 1757. (Note to 96). Until end of season Gold.'s contract still calls for 8 plays a year, and he is in arrears. In the absence of more positive indications date adopted for 95 seems probable.

Sources: See Mem. II, pp. 71 & 80, and Pasq., vol. VII, p. 100. (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69, 90.

96.—LA DONNA DI MANEGGIO. Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 73; note to 95). First ed. 1764–68, vol. VIII, Pasq.

Play dedicated to Mme. du Boccage. First ed., p. 18: "Quand' io l'ho dato al Teatro, non avea l'onor di conoscervi, che per fama." Gold. met Mme. du Boccage after March 1, 1757, when he returned from Parma (Mun. of Ven., vol. XIII, p. 15; *Mem.* II, pp. 90, 373, 383).

Sources: Molière, *L'Avare, Le Cocu imaginaire.* (Avarice), 41, 58, 64, 88.

97.—L'IMPRESARIO DELLE SMIRNE. First largely Ven., Bolognese, and with "i *riboboli* Fiorentini" (Pasq., vol. XII, p.

* "Similmente in quest' anno 1757, succese una cosa simile nella Rappresentazione della *Donna sola,* la quale precipitò, dopo lo strepitoso incontro della terza Commedia Persiana, *Ircana in Ispaan* intitolata."

269), later Tuscan; first Mart., 3 acts (ibid.; *Mem.* II, p. 74), later prose, 5 acts. Ends Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 74; note to 95). First ed. 1774, vol. XII, Pasq.

Nine plays this year. If account is correct, it explains why new contract which begins now, calls for at least 6 (see 1754–55) and allows 9 plays. Probability for date of 97 as adopted increased by its being in dialect when first presented, Gold. giving a play in Ven. at end of every year of his connection with San Luca except the first, and 3 times out of 5 during Medebac period.

Sources: (Actors), 14, 32, 57. Francesco Bardella, manager of two theatres at Genoa (1736), original of *impresario* in Act I, 3. (Intriguing women), 10, 14, 23, 25, 36. (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69, 90, 95.

Summ. 98.—*IL CAVALIERE DI SPIRITO* (*Il Cavaliere di spirito ossia la Donna di testa debole*). Mart., 5 acts. For Albergati at Zola, Summ. (Pitt., vol. X). At San Luca shortly before Jan. 10, 1764 (Masi, *Lettere,* pp. 236 & 240). First ed. 1764, vol. X, Pitt.

Sources: (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77, 81, 84.

Aut. 99.—LA VEDOVA SPIRITOSA. Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Pitt., vol. VII, 1761, which is first ed.). In prose, 3 acts, Rome, Carn., 1759 (ibid.); see 112.

Source: Marmontel, *Le Scrupule, ou l'Amour mécontant de lui-même,* story Gold. saw in the *Mercure de France* while at Parma, Dec. 1756 – March 1757. (Cicisbeim), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77, 81, 84, 98.

100.—IL PADRE PER AMORE. Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Pasq., vol. IX; Pitt., vol. IX, 1763, which is first ed.).

Sources: Françoise Graffigny, *Cénie,* which Gold. saw at Parma the previous winter. An anecdote in the *Recueil des causes célèbres* (*Mem.* II, p. 78). Ariosto, *I Suppositi.*

1758. Carn. 101.—LA BELLA SELVAGGIA. Tragi-comedy (Pitt. and Zatta). Mart., 5 acts. Carn. (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* p. 279; Zatta, vol. 28; Pitt., vol. VII, 1761, which is first ed.).

Sources: L'Abbé Prévost, *Histoire générale des voyages.* Similar to 66, 75, 83, 91.

102.—LO SPIRITO DI CONTRADDIZIONE. Mart., 5 acts. Carn. (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* p. 279; Zatta, vol. XXVII; Pitt., vol. IX, 1763, which is first ed.).

In *Mem.* II, p. 115 et seq. Gold. places 102 with 93, 104, 108, 110 in theatrical year of his absence in Rome (1758–59). Since he is in error for 93, 104, 108, he may be in error for 102.

Source: Dufresny, *L'Esprit de contradiction,* but see *Mem.* II, p. 117. For Il conte Alessandro, see 10, 39, 98.

103.—IL RICCO INSIDIATO. Mart., 5 acts. Carn. (Spinelli,

Bibl. gold., p. 279; Della Torre, p. 40; *Mem.* II, p. 95). First ed. 1761, vol. VII, Pitt.

Date in Zatta and Pitt.: Aut., 1758, improbable, because 1°, of the 6 plays as given here for 1758–59 five are certain and one very probable; 2°, Gold. not likely to give more than contract required at a time when he was preparing to go to Rome, and changing 99 and 104 into prose for perf. there.

104.—LE MORBINOSE. Ven., except 1 rôle. Mart., 5 acts. Ends Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 118). First ed. 1761, vol. VIII, Pitt.

Number 113 derived from 104 which, therefore, precedes it. Date in Pitt.: Aut., 1758, improbable, because Venetian plays end Carn. Note to 97.

Sources: (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97.

Summ. 105.—*L'APATISTA o sia L'INDIFFERENTE.* Mart., 5 acts. For Albergati at Zola, Summ. (Pitt., vol. X). At San Luca Aut. 1763 (Masi, *Lettere*, p. 236). First ed. Jan., 1764, vol. X, Pitt.

Sources: (Men who profit by cicisbeism of women), 10, 23, 39, 80, 84. (Cicisbeism), see 99. Apastista of the same family as 39, 98, 102. Cp. also 89.

106.—*LA DONNA BIZZARRA* (*La Donna capricciosa*). Mart., 5 acts. For Albergati at Zola, Summ. (Pitt., vol. X). At San Luca Jan., 1759.* First ed. Jan., 1764, vol. X, Pitt.

Sources: Molière, *Le Misanthrope.* (Pert women), 11, 15, 21, 37, 49, 50, 56, 59, 60, 63, 67, 86, 93, 96, 99. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54, 84. Derived from 86 (Gold.'s preface in 1st ed.).

Aut. 107.—LA DONNA DI GOVERNO. Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Pitt., vol. VIII, 1761, which is first ed.). One perf. only (*Mem.* II, p. 96, and Mazzoni's note).

Gold. to Vicini, July 5, 1758: "Domani vado un poco in villa a respirare, dopo due commedie novellamente finite, *La Donna di governo* e *La Sposa sagace.*" (Rivista di Roma, Febr. 10, 1907: *Quattro lettere di C. G.*).

Sources: (Pert women), 11, 15, 21, 37, 49, 50, 56, 59, 60, 63, 67, 78, 86, 93, 96, 99, 106. (Intriguing women), 10, 14, 23, 25, 36, 97. Chiari, *La Donna di governo.* J. A. Nelli, *La Serva padrona.*

108.—LA SPOSA SAGACE. Mart., 5 acts. Oct. 13 (Gradenigo, *Cod. 67*, Museo Correr; note to 107). First ed. 1761, vol. VIII, Pitt.

Sources: (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77, 81, 84, 98, 105. (Neurasthenics), 51 (*Ottavio*), 89 (*Don Mauro*), 90 (*Mons. Guden*), 108 (*Petronilla*). J. A. Nelli, *Il Matrimonio per astuzia o Il Viluppo.* Molière, *Georges Dandin.*

* Vendramin to Gold., Dec. 30, 1758: "Subito dopo l'Epifania (Jan. 8, 1759) anderà in Scena la *Donna capricciosa.*" (Mantovani, p. 77).

109.—LA DALMATINA. Tragi-comedy, Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Pitt., vol. IX, 1763, which is first ed.).

Gold. in pref. to play: "E tosto terminata la recita, partì per Roma." Vendramin to Gold., referring to 1758–59: "Nulla più le dico, perchè ella ha veduto che la sola *Dalmatina* ha avuto l'assenso del popolo." (Mantovani, p. 118).

Sources: According to *Mem.* II, p. 91, Mme. du Boccage, *Les Amazones;* but in *Il Dalmata,* Aug. 8, 1891, Maddalena says "it would be a mistake to insist on considering it the source of *La Dalmatina.*" Similar to 66, 75, 83, 91, 101.

1759. Carn. (106.—LA DONNA BIZZARRA, which see.) Perhaps substituted for 116 (Note to 116 and to 106).

110.—LA BUONA MADRE. Ven. Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 117; Della Torre, p. 41). First ed. 1764–68, vol. IX, Pasq.

See note to 102. But letter March 15, 1759 (Mantovani, p. 97) accounts for 6 plays this year, and it is improbable that Gold. should not be right once in five times. Its failure in this year of failures (Note to 109), increases likelihood of date assigned.

Sources: See Pasq., vol. IX, preface to play. (Upright women), 6, 23, 25, 26, 52, 55, 81, 82, 86.

111.—I MORBINOSI. Ven., Mart., 5 acts. Ends Carn. (Mantovani: Vendramin on Dec. 30, 1758, and March 15, 1759). First ed. 1763, vol. IX, Pitt.

Dec. 30: "e poi converrà attendersi le due ultime settimane di Febbraio per fare la recita delli *Morbinosi.*"

March 15: "l'aver giudicati li *Morbinosi* commedia non terminata," etc.

First ed. confirms date.

Sources: (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97, 104.

INTERIM.

For the Tordinona Theatre, Rome.

1758. Dec. 26. 112.—LA VEDOVA SPIRITOSA. Prose form of 99, in 3 acts. Carn. (*Mem.* II, pp. 101 & 107; Pitt., vol. VII). Printed 1759, Rome.

1759. Carn. 113.—LE DONNE DI BUON UMORE. Prose and Tuscan form of 104, in 3 acts. Carn. (Zatta, vol. VI, 1789, which is first ed.)

For the Capranica Theatre, Rome.

1759–60. 114.—PAMELA MARITATA. Written before July, 1759; perf. during 1759–60 (*Mem.* II, p. 109; Pasq., p. 233, vol. I, 1761, which is first ed.).

Sources: Number 38, to which it is a sequel. (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69, 90, 95, 97.

1759. 115.—GLI AMORI DI ALESSANDRO MAGNO. Tragi-comedy, verse, 5 acts. Sent to Vendramin from Bologna Aug. 7, 1759

(Mantovani, p. 120). No record of perf. First ed. 1793, vol. XXXI, Zatta.

Letter Aug. 21, 1759 (Mantovani, p. 122) describes series of 9 plays projected by Gold. during his return from Rome. Each was to honour one of the Muses, while the *Introduzione* to this year, *Il Monte Parnasso,* presents Apollo inviting them to state how they intended to entertain Venice in 1759–60. No record of a recital of this *Introduzione;* Gold. in the Memoirs ignoring the project, and starting story of present year with a description of 119.

Letter, and *Introduzione* (Zatta, vol. XXXI) show that to Clio belongs, 115, to Terpsichore 117, to Melpomene 118, to Erato 119, to Urania 122, to Calliope 121, this being order in which Gold. planned them. He indicates no plays for Euterpe, Thalia, or Polymnia, respectively 5th, 8th, and 9th in the plan, though Mantovani, giving no authority, ascribes 106 to Euterpe, and 37 to Polymnia.

Aut. 116.—LA DONNA FORTE (*La Sposa fidele*). Mart., 5 acts. Aut. (Mantovani, letters III, IV, V, VIII, X). First ed. 1761, vol. VIII, Pitt.

Belongs to 1758-59, but did not pass Censors (Mantovani, Dec. 30, 1758). From Rome, Jan. 27, 1759 Gold. returns play revised and title changed to *Sposa fidele.* On March 15, 1759 Vendramin again refers to 116 as not approved by Censors. Season over then, therefore not perf. Aut. 1758 (Pitt.), nor Aut. 1754 (*Mem.* II, p. 33).

Sources: Legends of "Santa Uliva, Santa Genoveffa, Crescenzia, o sia della Fanciula o Sposa perseguitata," see 6, 44. (Women who resist cicisbeism), 10, 26, 43. (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 77, 81, 84, 98, 99, 105, 108. Don Fernando resembles Iago.

117.—LA SCUOLA DI BALLO. Verse in *terza rima,* 5 acts. Before Oct. 23 (*Commemoriali,* Cod. Gradenigo, this date: Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, p. 396). See note to 115. First ed. 1792, vol. XXIV, Zatta.

Sources: (Stage folk), 14, 32, 57, 97.

118.—ARTEMISIA. Tragedy. Placed here because 3d in series of 9, see note to 115. Not perf. (*Mem.* II, p. 354). First ed. 1793, vol. XXXIII, Zatta.

119.—GL'INNAMORATI. Aut. (*Mem.* II, p. 120: written in 2 weeks, Sept.). First ed. 1761 (sic.), vol. II, Pasq.

Sources: See *Mem.* II, p. 119 et seq., pp. 104, 111; Carletta, *Dove abitò Goldoni a Roma.* Fabrizio (Poloni) a social climber, see 33, 59.

1760. Carn. 120.—I RUSTEGHI (*La Compagnia dei salvadeghi ossia i Rusteghi*). Ven. Feb. 16 (Gasparo Gozzi in *Gazzetta veneta,* No. V; Pasq. vol. III, 1761 (sic), which is first ed.).

"Addì 16 di febbraio si vide per la prima volta questa commedia rappresentata nel teatro di San Luca, e col ripeterne le rappresentazioni chiusero i comici di quella compagnia il carnovale di quest' anno 1760." (Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, p. 386).

Sources: (Cicisbeism), 20, 21, 26, 27, 30, 33, 36, 39, 43, 52, 60, 64, 71, 81, 84, 98, 99, 105, 108, 116. (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97, 104, 111.

Aut. 121.—ENEO NEL LAZIO. Tragedy. Oct. 24 (Mantovani, p. 131, Note 4). See note to 115. First ed. 1793, vol. XXXII, Zatta.

122.—ZOROASTRO. Tragi-comedy. Nov. 29 (Mantovani, p. 131, Note 3). See note to 115. First ed. 1793, vol. XXXII, Zatta.

123.—LA CASA NOVA. Ven. Dec. 11 (Gasparo Gozzi in *Gazzetta veneta,* Dec. 13, 1760: Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, p. 395). First ed. 1768, vol. X, Pasq.

Sources: (Cicisbeism), see 120. See *Mem.* II, p. 121. (Venetian life), see 120.

1761. Carn. 124.—LA GUERRA. Carn. (Mun. of Ven., vol. VII, p. 323: it was written in 1760). First ed. 1764, vol. VI, Pasq.

Gold. in Pasq., vol. X, p. 189: *L'Amante militare* (50) "è nata dieci anni prima dell' altra," the *altra* being 124.

Sources: (Militarism), 50, 72. (Serva padrona), 49, 63, 67, 107. (Intriguing women), 10, 14, 23, 25, 36, 97, 107. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54, 84, 106.

125.—LE BARUFFE CHIOZZOTTE. Ven. Ends Carn. (*Mem.* II, p. 126, passage concerning beginning of Pasq. ed.; Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 59). First ed. 1774, vol. XV, Pasq.

Sources: Gold.'s experience while *Coadjutore* at Chioggia (*Mem.* II, p. 126, *Mem.* I, p. 117 et seq. (Venetian life), 10, 23, 34, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97, 104, 111, 120, 123.

Summ. 126.—*L'OSTERIA DELLA POSTA.* 1 act. For Albergati at Zola, Summ. (Pitt., vol. X, 1763, which is first ed.).

Aut. 127.—LE SMANIE DELLA VILLEGGIATURA. Aut. (See 129). First ed. 1768–74, vol. XI, Pasq.

Source: See 129. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54, 84, 106, 124.

128.—LE AVVENTURE DELLA VILLEGGIATURA. Aut. (See 129). First ed. that of 127.

Source: See 129. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54, 84, 106, 124, 127.

129.—IL RITORNO DALLA VILLEGGIATURA. Aut. (Mazzoni, Note to *Mem.* II, p. 53, where Oct.–Nov. is specified; see note to 84; Pasq. gives 1761 for 127, 1762 for 128, 1763 for 129). First ed. that of 127.

Sources: (Villeggiatura), 11, 49, 67, 80, 84, 127, 128. (Men who profit by cicisbeism of women), 10, 23, 39, 57, 80, 84, 105, 107. (Healing by mental suggestion), 90; see 42, 45, 58, 90, 128 (Act I, 6) for further allusions to or characterisations of physicians. (Egoism), 41, 54, 88, 89, 105. Molière, *Don Juan, ou le Festin de pierre.*

130.—LA SCOZZESE. 5 acts. Nov. 3 (Chiari in *Gazzetta veneta*, Nov. 7 and 11, 1761: *Mem.* II, p. 405). First ed. 1774, vol. XIII, Pasq.

Nov. 7, "Martedì prossimamente passato nel Teatro a S. Luca rappresentata fu una nuova Commedia del sig. dottor Goldoni intitolata *La Scozzese*," Nov. 7 falling on a Saturday. *Gazzetta veneta* edited by Gasparo Gozzi from Febr. 8, 1760 until Jan. 31, 1761 (*Mem.* II, p. 386), when Chiari became the editor (Neri, *L'Ateneo veneto a C. G.*, p. 99).

Source: Voltaire, *L'Ecossaise*, which in turn resembles 26 (Neri, *Una Fonta dell' "Ecossaise" di Voltaire*), and 34 (Bouvy, *Voltaire et l'Italie*, p. 229). (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69, 90, 95, 97, 114.

131.—SIOR TODERO (TODARO, TODORO) BRONTOLON o sia IL VECCHIO FASTIDIOSO. Ven. Ends Aut. (Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, p. 405; Zatta, vol. IX; Pasq. has Carn. 1761, which may be meant for theatrical year). First ed. 1774; vol. XIV, Pasq.

Sources: See *Mem.* II, p. 131. (Venetian life), see 125. (Prudent women), 43, 73, 110.

1762. Carn. 132.—UNA DELLE ULTIME SERE DI CARNOVALE. Ven. Feb. 23 (*Mem.* II, p. 137). First ed. after 1777, vol. XVI, Pasq.

Sources: See *Mem.* II, p. 137 et seq. Vendramin represented by *Zamaria*, Gold. by *Anzoletto*. (Venetian life), 10, 23, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97, 104, 111, 120, 123, 125, 131. (Plays in which Gold. is represented in a character), 45, 72, 90. (Gaming), 25, 34, 40, 54, 84, 106, 124, 127, 128.

Plays Unclassified in Regard to Date, but Belonging to San Luca Period.

133.—LA METEMPSICOSI ossia LA PITAGORICA TRASMIGRAZIONE. Mart. First ed. 1793, vol. XXXI, Zatta, no date.

134.—LA BELLA GIORGIANA. Tragi-comedy. First ed. 1792, vol. XXVIII, Zatta, no date.

First contract with Vendramin (Note preceding 64) calls for 32 plays, the second for 30. Including everything, this catalogue describes and places 71 plays in this period. Not intended for, or performed at, San Luca were 112, 113, 114 of the interim at Rome, and six of the seven plays for amateurs, 106 being given professionally at the San Luca. Deducting, therefore, nine plays from the 71, we see that the catalogue ascribes 62 plays to San Luca theatre, exactly the number required by the two contracts.

The year 1754–55 seems to lack 2 plays, but 1756–57 makes up one; period of 1st contract, therefore, lacks one play, and either 133 or 134 should belong to it, legally or in fact. Period of 2d contract lacks one play in 1760–61, but since article 6 of 2d contract provides for a bonus of 200 ducats a year payable to Gold. if he fulfils all the terms of this contract, it is almost certain that either 133 or 134 belongs to 1760–61. And of these two 134 is the

more probable, since it is a tragi-comedy, the two years of 1759–61 being a time of tragedies and tragi-comedies.

For the Comédie Italienne, Paris; the San Luca Theatre, Venice; the Comédie Française, Paris.

Unless otherwise stated, the plays here described were given at the Comédie Italienne. The improvised comedies are not in print.

Correspondence between Gold. and Vendramin from May 2, 1763 until June 23, 1763 (Mantovani), establishes existence of new understanding, modifying contract of March 2, 1762, and allowing him to use any comedy he may write for the Comédie Italienne for the filling of his obligations to San Luca, rewriting such plays, of course, "to fit the actors of the San Luca, and Italian usage."

During time between Gold.'s arrival in Paris, Aug. 26, 1762, and Feb. 4, 1763, numbers 17 and 47 (the latter under title *Les Caquets des femmes* and transl. by Francesco Riccoboni and his wife: Mun. of Ven., vol. VI, p. 502) had long runs at the Comédie Italienne (Masi, *Lettere,* Sept. 6 and Oct. 25; Mantovani, p. 160; Mem. II, p. 159).

1763. 135.—L'AMORE PATERNO o sia LA SERVA RICONOSCENTE. 2 masks and a Scapino. Feb. 4 (Pasq., vol. V: Gold.'s letter Feb. 14, 1763, "Finalmente la Commedia andò in iscena il dì 4 di questo mese."). First ed. 1763, vol. V, Pasq.

Number 135 surreptitiously perf. in Venice. This appears from Gold.'s letter Feb., 1763: "So, che dall' estratto hanno fatto una nuova Commedia, che l'hanno promessa al Pubblico come cosa mia, ed a quest' ora rappresentata."; and from Vendramin's letter Feb. 26, 1763: "Alli comuni ed universali applausi di tutti, sì in Parigi, come in Venezia, per la buona riuscita della prima sua fatica, etc." (Mantovani). Hence Gold. insists on modification of 3d contract with Vendramin; see note to title of this division.

Sources: Molière, *Le Dépit amoureux, Le Misanthrope.* (Plays in which Gold. is represented in a character), 45, 72, 90, 132 (See first ed. of 135, p. 270). (Servetta rôles), 49, 55, 63, 67, 78, 107.

136.—LA FORZA DEL SANGUE o sia ARLECCHINO CREDUTO MORTO. Improvised comedy, 1 act. Feb. 7 (Masi, *Lettere,* Feb. 28, 1763: "Su la quarta recita del—135—ho aggiunto una commedia a soggetto d'un atto solo. È intitolato *La Forza del sangue.*").

137.—ARLEQUIN VALET DE DEUX MAÎTRES. Number 16 adapted to French taste. March 4 (Masi, *Lettere,* Gold. to Cornet, Feb. 28, 1763).

138.—ARLECCHINO, EREDE RIDICOLO (*Arlequin, héritier ridicule*). Improvised comedy, 5 acts. Before April 18 (Masi, *Lettere,* April 18, 1763).

Source: Number 103 (Masi, ibid.).

139.—IL VENTAGLIO. Between April 18 and June 13 (Masi, *Lettere,* these dates, on first of which Gold. says: "Credo che si darà in questo mese." Sent to Vendramin Nov. 27, 1764 (Mantovani, p. 224). First ed. 1789, vol. IV, Zatta.

Sources: Numbers 69, 87, 125 (Mantovani, ibid.).

140.—I DUE FRATELLI RIVALI. Improvised comedy, 1 act. Before June 13 (Masi, *Lettere,* p. 213: 139 "è troppo inviluppata per l'abilità di questi comici. Sono stato risarcito dai *Due Fratelli rivali.*").

141.—LE DUE ITALIANE. Written before July 11 (Masi, *Lettere,* p. 220). Not perf. (*Mem.* II, p. 350; Masi, *Scelta di comm.,* vol. II, p. 463). Lost.

July 11, 1763: "Ne ho fatta una per qui, intitolata *Les Deux Italiennes,* ma tutta scritta, avendo protestato a questi signori di non voler più fare commedie a soggetto." And Aug. 15: "Ma non hanno ancora imparato — 141 —."

142.—IL MATRIMONIO PER CONCORSO. Sent to Vendramin on or before July 11 (Mantovani, p. 190; Masi, *Lettere,* p. 220). Perf. in Italy; Summ. (Mantovani, p. 193, Note 1). First ed. 1778, vol. XIV, Sav.

Sources: Probably 141 rewritten (Masi, *Scelta di comm.,* vol. II, p. 462). (Merchants), 14, 26, 58, 120. (Foreigners), 21, 38, 58, 69, 90, 95, 97, 114, 124, 130.

143.—GLI AMORI DI ARLECCHINO E DI CAMILLA. Improvised comedy. Sept. 27 (Bachaumont, *Mémoires secrets,* vol. I, p. 282: Rabany, p. 379; Masi, *Lettere,* Oct. 3, 1763: "Oggi otto, ho dato al pubblico una commedia intitolata *Les Amours d'Arlequin et de Camille.*"). Sent under title GLI AMORI DI ZELINDA E LINDORO to Vendramin before Oct. 21, 1764 (Mantovani, pp. 197, 199, 213) in written form. First ed. 1788, vol. I, Zatta.

Sources: Molière, *Le Cocu imaginaire.* (Upright women), 6, 23, 25, 26, 52, 55, 81, 82, 110. Bartoli, p. xxxix, gives title of scenario, *Gli Amori di Arlecchino,* perf. Paris, 1746.

144.—LA GELOSIA DI ARLECCHINO. Improvised comedy. Between Sep. 27 and Dec. 20 (See 143 and 145). Sent under title LA GELOSIA DI LINDORO to Vendramin Oct.–Nov., 1764 (Mantovani, letters XLVI & XLVII) in written form. First ed. 1789, vol. III, Zatta.

Sources: Number 143, to which it is a sequel. Molière, *Le Cocu imaginaire.*

145.—LE INQUIETUDINI DI CAMILLA. Improvised comedy. Dec. 20 (Masi, *Lettere,* Dec. 27, 1763: "La terza Commedia è andata in scena oggi otto passato."). Sent under title LE INQUIETUDINI DI ZELINDA to Vendramin, Oct.–Nov., 1764

(Mantovani, Jan. 17, Oct. 21, Nov. 4, Nov. 7, 1764) in written form. First ed. 1788, vol. II, Zatta.

Sources: Numbers 143, 144, to which it is a sequel. Molière, *Le Cocu imaginaire.*

1764. 146.—CAMILLE AUBERGISTE. Improvised comedy, 2 acts, 4 rôles. After Feb. 6 (Masi, *Lettere,* Feb. 6, 1764: "Quanto prima si darà una mia commedia intitolata—146—"), and probably May 1 (Desboulmiers, who says it had 3 acts).

Source: Number 59. In letter last quoted Gold. indicates how 146 differs from 59.

147.—L'INGANNO VENDICATO (*Arlequin dupe vengée, La Dupe vengée*). Improvised comedy. Followed 146 (Grimm, Part I, vol. IV, p. 121).

148.—*LA BURLA RETROCESSA NEL CONTRACCAMBIO.* For Albergati. Sent April 31 (Masi, *Lettere,* April 31, 1764). Lost; but see 153.

Source: Number 147 (Masi, *Scelta di comm.,* vol. II, p. 463).

149.—IL RITRATTO D'ARLECCHINO (*Le Portrait d'Arlequin*). Improvised comedy, 2 acts. Before Sept. 24 (Masi, *Lettere,* Sept. 24, 1764: "Tre commedie ho dato ultimamente, *Le Portrait d'Arlequin, Le Rendez-vous nocturne* e *l'Inimité d'Arlequin et de Scapin.*"). Sent under title GLI AMANTI TIMIDI o sia L'IMBROGLIO DE' DUE RITRATTI to Vendramin, end of 1764 (Rabany, p. 236; *Mem.* II, p. 202; Mantovani, letters between Oct. 21, 1764, and Jan. 10, 1765), in written form, 3 acts. First ed. after 1777, vol. XVII, Pasq.

Source: "Ella potrebbe passare per una Commedia Spagnuola, perchè tutto il merito consiste negli equivoci, e nell' intreccio." (Gold. in Pasq., vol. XVII, p. 236).

150.—L'APPUNTAMENTO NOTTURNO (*Le Rendez-vous nocturne*), 1 act, and

151.—L'INIMICIZIA D'ARLECCHINO E DI SCAPINO (*L'Inimité d'Arlequin et de Scapin*), 2 acts. Two improvised comedies, written before Sept. 24 (Masi, *Lettere,* p. 256).

152.—LES MÈTAMORPHOSES D'ARLEQUIN. Improvised comedy. Oct. 29 (Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, note to p. 165).

153.—CHI LA FA L'ASPETTA o sia LA BURLA VENDICATA NEL CONTRACCAMBIO FRA'I CHIASSETTI DEL CARNEVAL (*I Chiassetti e spassetti de carneval de Venezia*). Ven. Given to Vendramin Jan. 10, 1765 (Mantovani, p. 233; letters of Dec. 17, 1764, and Jan. 3, 1765, ibid.). First ed. 1789, vol. V, Zatta.

Sources: Numbers 147, 148 (Masi, *Scelta di comm.,* vol. II, p. 463). (Venetian life), 10, 23, 47, 54, 78, 82, 87, 97, 104, 111, 120, 123, 125, 131, 132.

Other Plays, unclassified in Regard to Dates, but performed at the Comédie Italienne between 1762 and 1764.

See *Mem.* II, p. 350, and Rabany, p. 234, who quotes vol. III, p 210 of the *Anecdotes dramatiques.*

154.—LA FAMIGLIA IN DISCORDIA (*La Famille en discorde*). Improvised comedy, 1 act.

155.—ARLEQUIN COMPLAISANT. Improvised comedy.

156.—L'AMITIÉ D'ARLEQUIN ET DE SCAPIN. Ditto.

157.—ARLEQUIN PHILOSOPHE. Ditto.

158.—ARLECCHINO E CAMILLA, SCHIAVI IN BARBARIA (*Arlequin et Camille, esclaves en Barbarie*). Improvised comedy, 3 acts "avec un divertissement."

159.—ARLECCHINO CARBONAIO (*Arlequin charbonnier*). Improvised comedy, 1 act.

160.—L'ANELLO MAGICO (*La Bague magique*). Improvised comedy, 2 acts (*Mem.* II, p. 350), or 3 acts (*Almanach des spectacles* of 1770). Toldo, *Tre commedie francese inedite di C. G.*, thinks it is same as, or similar to, 144.

161.—L'EPOUSE PERSANE. Source: Number 66. See Rabany, p. 233.

Received, but not produced, by the Comédie Italienne, besides 141 already described, and 170 (Rabany, p. 234; *Mem.* II, p. 355).

162.—LA SCHIAVA GENEROSA (*L'Esclave généreuse, ou la Générosité de Camille*). "Comédie en trois actes."

163.—LES MARCHANDS. Possibly 58 rewritten.

164.—SCAPIN JALOUX. Improvised comedy.

165.—LES RUSES INNOCENTES DE CAMILLE. Ditto.

166.—LE GONDOLIER, AMI D'ARLEQUIN. Ditto.

167.—TAL PADRONA, TAL SERVA (*Telle maîtresse, telle suivante*). "Comédie en cinq actes, en prose."

168.—I NASTRI DI COLOR ROSA (*Les Noeuds de couleur de rose*). "Comédie en un acte, en prose."

169.—LA GUERRA DE' BERGAMASCHI (*La Guerre des Bergamasques*). "Comédie à spectacle, en cinq actes, en prose."

1768. 170.—IL GENIO BUONO E IL GENIO CATTIVO. 5 acts, 2 masks. Given to Comédie Italienne before Nov., 1764 (Mantovani, p. 220), but not performed there (Rabany, p. 234). At San Crisostomo theatre, Venice, Carn. 1768–69 (Masi, *Scelta di comm.*, vol. II, p. 572; Della Torre, p. 43; *Mem.* II, p. 205). First ed. 1793, vol. XXXIV, Zatta.

Source: Carlo Gozzi, *Le Fiabe teatrali.*

1771. 171.—LE CINQUE ETÀ D'ARLECCHINO (*Les Cinq âges d'Arlequin*). Improvised comedy "à spectacle," 5 acts. Sept. 27 (Grimm, Part II, vol. II, p. 57).

172.—LE BOURRU BIENFAISANT. French prose. Comédie Française, Nov. 4 (Grimm, Part II, vol. II, p. 69; *Mem.* II, p. 221). First ed. 1771, Veuve Duchesne, Paris.

Another French ed. 1771, Veuve Duchesne, Paris, contains a transl. into It., translator unknown. A transl. by Pietro Candoni was published 1772, vol. XIII, Sav., under title *Il Burbero benefico o sia il Bisbetico di buon cuore.* An It. version which is in *Composizioni teatrali moderne tradotte da Elisabetta Caminer,* was perf. at the Sant' Angelo, Venice, during Carn. 1772 under title *Il Collerico di buon cuore.* Finally a transl., or rather a version, by Gold. was published in 1789, Veuve Duchesne, Paris, under title *Il Burbero di buon cuore.* (Spinelli, *Bibl. gold.,* pp. 128 and 244; Malamani, *Nuovi appunti e curiosità goldoniane,* p. 154 et seq.).

Sources: Numbers 123, 131. Not impossible that first germ of 172 is Freeport in Voltaire, *L'Ecossaise;* but gruff men with susceptible hearts can be found in several other plays, in 59, 120, 125 for instance.

1776. 173.—L'AVARE FASTUEUX. French prose. The Court, Fontainebleau, Nov. 14 (Rabany, p. 251), its failure there indefinitely deferring perf. at Comédie Française. Gold. withdrew 172 on Nov. 22 (Rabany, p. 304). Written in 1772 (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 122). First ed. (Transl. into Italian, 5 acts), 1789, vol. IX, Zatta.

Sources: (Avarice), 41, 58, 64, 88, 96. Molière, *L'Avare, Le Bourgeois gentilhomme.* (Social climbing), 33, 59, 119.

2.—BOOKS FOR OPERAS, LIGHT OPERAS, AND INTERLUDES.

Unless otherwise indicated, these plays for music are in verse, have 3 acts, and were first perf. in Venice. Under the term "light opera" is included what Gold. calls *Dramma giocoso, Dramma comico,* and *Commedia per musica.* "Interlude" has been adopted as the English for *Intermezzo.* The light operas being in the majority, they have not been pointed out as such. Of the many composers who wrote scores for Gold.'s books, Baldassare Galuppi has twenty-one to his credit, Cimarosa has two (25, 49), Paisiello three (36, 42, 47), Haydn four (42, 46, 55, 63), Johann Christian Bach one (56), and Mozart one (83).

1730. 1.—IL BUON PADRE o IL BUON VECCHIO. Interlude (Pasq., vol. IX, p. 10; Musatti, *Drammi musicali di C. G.*), prose (sic: *Mem.* II, p. 343), Feltre (Amateurs). Acts? Lost.

2.—LA CANTATRICE. Interlude, 2 acts, ibid. (Amateurs).

1732. 3.—AMALASUNTA. Opera (tragedy for music), not perf., burned.

1733. 4.—IL GONDOLIERE (BARCAROLO) VENEZIANO o sia GLI SDEGNI AMOROSI. Interlude, Ven., 2 acts, Aut., Milan, Vitali troupe. First play by Gold. perf. professionally.

1734. 5.—LA PUPILLA. Interlude, San Samuele.

6.—LA PELARINA. Interlude, ibid.

1735. 7.—ARISTIDE. Interlude, Aut., ibid.

8.—L'IPPOCONDRIACO. Interlude, Aut., ibid.

9.—LA BIRBA. Interlude, 2 acts, at 5th perf. of *Rosmonda* (A, 1, 4), ibid.

10.—GRISELDA. Opera, Ascension, ibid. Adapted from *Griselda* by Zeno and Pariati.

11.—LA BOTTEGA DEL CAFFÈ. Interlude. Perf. not certain before 1743, Milan (*Mem.* I, Note to p. 254). Zatta gives Venice, 1735.

12.—LA FONDAZIONE DI VENEZIA. Interlude, 1 act, Oct. 4, San Samuele.

13.—CESARE IN EGITTO. Opera, Aut., S. Giov. Crisostomo. Doubt of authorship.

1736. 14.—LA GENEROSITÀ POLITICA. Opera, Ascension, San Samuele.

15.—PISISTRATO. ?. No record of perf. (Zatta gives Ascension), nor of music.

16.—L'AMANTE CABALA. Interlude, Aut., San Samuele.

17.—MONSIEUR PETITON. Interlude, ibid.

1737. 18.—LUCREZIA ROMANA IN CONSTANTINOPOLI. Carn., ibid.

1739. 19.—GERMONDO. Interlude, Carn., Venice. London, Haymarket, 1776.

1740. 20.—GUSTAVO PRIMO, RE DI SVEZIA. Opera, Ascension, San Samuele.

21.—ORONTE, RE DE' SCITI. Opera, Dec. 26, S. Giov. Crisostomo.

1741. 22.—LA STATIRA. Opera, Ascension, San Samuele (?).

23.—AMOR FA L'UOMO CIECO. Interlude, Carn., Filarmonico theatre, Verona.

24.—TIGRANE. Opera, Aut., S. Giov. Crisostomo. Adapted from book by B. Vittori.

1743. 25.—LA CONTESSINA. Jan., San Samuele.

26.—LA FAVOLA DE' TRE GOBBI. Interlude, 2 acts, Carn., San Moisè.

27.—IL QUARTIERE FORTUNATO. Interlude. Related to *L'Amante militare* (A, 1, 50), and belonging to period 1734–44 (Mun. of Ven., vol. VII, p. 324).

1746. 28.—LA VEDOVA ACCORTA. Jan., S. Cassiano.
1747. 29.—LA MAESTRA. Aut., Formagliari theatre, Bologna.
30.—LA CADUTA D'AMULIO. Opera, Carn., Sant' Angelo. Authorship uncertain.
31.—L'ARCADIA IN BRENTA. Teatro Brocchi e Cortellotti, Bassano.
1748. 32.—LA SCUOLA MODERNA o sia LA MAESTRA DI BUON GUSTO. Aut., San Moisè. Adapted.
1749. 33.—IL CONTE CARAMELLA. Aut., theatre of Accademia Vecchia, Verona.
34.—LA MAESTRA DI SCUOLA. Aut., "nuovo teatro dietro la Rena," Verona.
35.—IL FINTO PRINCIPE. Aut., S. Cassiano. From old scenario.
36.—IL NEGLIGENTE. Oct., San Moisè.
37.—ARCIFANFANO, RE DEI MATTI. Dec. 27, ibid.
38.—BERTOLDO, BERTOLDINO E CACASENNO. Carn., ibid.
1750. 39.—IL PAESE DELLA CUCCAGNA. Ascension, ibid.
40.—IL MONDO ALLA ROVERSA (A ROVESCIO) o sia LE DONNE CHE COMANDANO. Burlesque, Aut., S. Cassiano. From old scenario.
41.—IL FILOSOFO DI CAMPAGNA (*La Serva astuta*). Opera, Carn., Ducal theatre, Milan.
42.—IL MONDO DELLA LUNA. Carn., San Moisè.
1751. 43.—LE DONNE VENDICATE. Carn., S. Cassiano.
44.—LA MASCHERATA. Carn., ibid.
1752. 45.—I PORTENTOSI EFFETTI DELLA MADRE NATURA. Aut., San Samuele.
46.—LE PESCATRICI. Carn., ibid.
47.—LE VIRTUOSE RIDICOLE. Ibid.
1753. 48.—I BAGNI D'ABANO. Carn., ibid.
49.—LA CALAMITA DEI CUORI. Feb., ibid.
50.—DE GUSTIBUS NON EST DISPUTANDUM. Dec. 27, S. Cassiano.
1754. 51.—LI MATTI PER AMORE. Jan. 17 (?), San Samuele.
1755. 52.—LE NOZZE. Summ., Marsigli-Rossi theatre, Bologna.
53.—LA DIAVOLESSA. Nov., San Samuele.
54.—IL POVERO SUPERBO. Carn., ibid. From *La Castalda* (A, 1, 49).
55.—LO SPEZIALE. Carn., ibid.
1756. 56.—LA CASCINA. Carn., ibid.
57.—LA RITORNATA DA LONDRA. Carn., ibid.
58.—LA CANTARINA. Interlude, Carn., Capranica theatre, Rome.

59.—IL MATRIMONIO DISCORDE. Interlude, Carn., ibid.

60.—LA BUONA FIGLIUOLA. Dec. 26 (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 43), Ducal theatre, Parma. From *Pamela nubile* (A, 1, 38).

1757. 61.—IL FESTINO. Carn., Ducal theatre, Parma. From *Il Festino* (A, 1, 71).

62.—I VIAGGIATORI RIDICOLI. Carn., Ducal theatre, Parma.

63.—L'ISOLA DISABITATA. Aut., San Samuele.

64.—IL MERCATO DI MALMANTILE. Dec. 26, ibid.

1758. 65.—IL SIGNOR DOTTORE. Aut., San Moisè.

66.—LA CONVERSAZIONE. Aut., Carignano theatre, Turin.

67.—BUOVO D'ANTONA. Carn. (Dec. 26?), San Moisè.

1759. 68.—IL CONTE CHICCHERA. Aut., Ducal theatre, Milan.

69.—IL CIARLATANO. Aut., San Samuele.

70.—LI UCCELLATORI. Carn. (Dec. 26?), San Moisè.

71.—LE DONNE RIDICOLE. Interlude, Carn. (Dec. 26?), Valle theatre, Rome.

1760. 72.—AMOR CONTADINO. Nov. 12, Sant' Angelo.

73.—FILOSOFIA ED AMORE. Carn., San Moisè.

74.—LA VENDEMMIA. Carn., Capranica theatre, Rome.

75.—LA FIERA DI SINIGAGLIA. Carn., ibid.

76.—AMOR ARTIGIANO. Dec. 26, Sant' Angelo.

1761. 77.—LA BUONA FIGLIUOLA MARITATA. May, Formigliari theatre, Bologna. From *Pamela maritata* (A, 1, 114).

78.—AMORE IN CARICATURA. Carn., Sant' Angelo.

79.—IL VIAGGIATOR RIDICOLO. Carn., San Moisè.

1762. 80.—LA BELLA VERITÀ. June 12, Marsigli-Rossi theatre, Bologna.

1763. 81.—IL RE ALLA CACCIA. Aut., San Samuele.

Gold.'s indication of sources: Sedaine, *Le Roi et le fermier;* Charles Collé, *La Partie de chasse d'Henri IV* (1766, *sic*). Both of these from Dodsley, *The King and the Miller of Mansfield.* All of them from Calderon, *El Alcalde de Zalamea.* See *Mem.* II, p. 211.

1764. 82.—LA DONNA DI GOVERNO. Aut., San Moisè. From *La Donna di governo* (A, 1, 107).

83.—LA FINTA SEMPLICE. Carn., ibid.

1766. 84.—LA CAMERIERA SPIRITOSA. Aut., Ducal theatre, Milan.

85.—LA NOTTE CRITICA. Carn., S. Cassiano. From *Le Rendez-vous nocturne* (A, 1, 150). See Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 64. And A, 1, 13.

1767. 86.—L'ASTUZIA FELICE. Aut., San Moisè.

1768. 87.—LE NOZZE IN CAMPAGNA. Aut., ibid.

1777. 88.—I VOLPONI. Date in doubt. Zatta gives 1777.

89.—L'ISOLA DI BENGODI. Aut., 2 acts, San Moisè.

1779. 90.—IL TALISMANO. Aut., "nuovo teatro alla Cannobiana," Milan.

1782. 91.—VITTORINA. For Haymarket theatre, London. Date in doubt, Zatta giving 1782. From *Mem.* II, pp. 210 & 211, one would conclude that its date is about 1770.

With *La Bouillotte (Mem.* II, p. 215) Gold. got no farther than the *Canevas* and a few abortive attempts at writing French verse. It was intended as a two-act light opera for the Opéra Comique of Paris.

Books unclassified in Regard to Dates.

92.—IL DISINGANNO IN CORTE. "Rappresentazione in due parti." Allegorical, 5 rôles. In vol. XXVI, Zatta.

93.—IL FILOSOFO. "Intermezzo di due parti per musica." In vol. XXXV, Zatta. It is not 41, which has 3 acts, and is in vol. XLIII, Zatta.

94.—LO SPOSO BURLATO. Dramma giocoso da rappresentarsi la primavera del 1778 nel teatro dell' Ill.mo Pubblico della Città di Carpi. Book in possession of sig. Vito Vitali. (See A. G. Spinelli, *Modena a C. G.*, p. 301 et seq.)

3.—CANTATAS AND SERENATAS.

1740. 1.—LA NINFA SAGGIA. Cantata, 2 voices, Ospitale della Pietà, Venice.

2.—GLI AMANTI FELICI. Cantata, 3 voices, ibid.

3.—LE QUATTRO STAGIONI. Cantata, 4 voices, ibid. Date of 1, 2, 3 *probably* 1740; see preface, p. 8, vol. XVI, Pasq.

1741. 4.—IL CORO DELLE MUSE (*Le Nove muse*). Serenata, 2 parts, ibid., middle of Lent (Pasq., vol. XVI, p. 8).

1744. 5.—LA PACE CONSOLATA. Cantata for wedding of Archduchess Marianna (Maria Theresa's sister) with Carlo Alessandro di Lorena, Jan. 7, theatre of Rimini.

1752. 6.—L'AMORE DELLA PATRIA. Serenata, 2 parts, written for the ceremony of raising to throne of the Doges, Francesco Loredan. Venice.

1758. 7—L'ORACOLO DEL VATICANO. Cantata, 3 voices, 2 parts, written for the ceremony of inducting to the dignity of the Cardinalship, Marino Priuli, Bishop of Vicenza.

1759. 8.—L'UNZIONE DI DAVIDDE. "Azione di due parti per musica." In vol. XXXVI, Zatta. See Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi*, pp. 51 and 56, and *Modena a C. G.*, p. 301.

Regarding *Sanctus Petrus Urseolus*, oratorio printed in Venice, 1733, and attributed to Gold., see *Modena a C. G.*, p. 301.

4.—MISCELLANEA.

1726. 1.—IL QUARESIMALE IN EPILOGO DEL M. R. P. GIACO-

MO CATTANEO IN UDINE. *Sonetti di Carlo Goldoni.* Udine. Copy in the Bibl. Civ., Venice.

1732. 2.—L'ESPERIENZA DEL PASSATO FATTA ASTROLOGO DELL' AVVENIRE. *Almanacco critico per l'anno 1732.* Venice.

1749. 3.—PROLOGO APOLOGETICO ALLA COMMEDIA *LA VEDOVA SCALTRA* CONTRO LE CRITICHE CONTENUTE NELLA COMMEDIA INTITOLATA *LA SCUOLA DELLA VEDOVE.* Nov.

1753. 4.—L' INTRODUZIONE COMICA o sia APERTURA DI TEATRO PER L'ANNO 1753. Oct. First ed. 1757, vol. I, Pitt.

1754. 5.—INTRODUZIONE IN PROSA ALLE RECITE DELL' AUTUNNO DELL' ANNO 1754. Oct. 7. First ed. 1757, vol. III, Pitt.

Source: Sior Zamaria della Bragola in numbers 4 and 5 imitated from Monsieur de la Thorillière in Molière, *L'Impromptu de Versailles.*

1755. 6.—INTRODUZIONE PER LA PRIMA SERA DELL' AUTUNNO DELL' ANNO 1755. First ed. 1758, vol. V, Pitt.

? 7.—LA GARA TRA LA COMMEDIA E LA MUSICA. INTRODUZIONE. First ed. Drammi, vol. XVI, Prato.

1759. 8.—IL MONTE PARNASSO. INTRODUZIONE. First ed. 1759, Pitt. (separate).

1764. 9.—DELLI COMPONIMENTI DIVERSI DI CARLO GOLDONI, AVVOCATO VENETO. Pasq., 2 vols. Contains 72 numbers of occasional verse.

1787. 10.—MÉMOIRES DE M. GOLDONI POUR SERVIR A L'HISTOIRE DE SA VIE ET A CELLE DE SON THÉATRE. Dédiés au Roi. Veuve Duchesne, 3 vols., Paris.

1791. 11.—STORIA DI MISS JENNY SCRITTA E ADDIRIZZATA DALLA MEDESIMA A MILEDY CONTESSA DI ROSCOMOND, AMBASCIATRICE DELLA CORTE DI FRANCIA A QUELLA DI DANIMARCA. *Opera di Madame Riccoboni* (Maria Laboras di Mezières) *celebre contante francese. Traduzione arbitraria del sig. Avv.to Carlo Goldoni.* Antonio Curti q. Giacomo, 2 vols., Venice. (Masi, *Lettere,* p. 304; Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi,* p. 107; Mazzoni, *Mem.* II, p. 465).

5.—ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS OF GOLDONI'S WORKS.

(a) COMEDIES.

1756. 1.—PAMELA (A, 1, 38). A Comedy by Charles Goldoni translated into English with the Italian original. London. Printed for J. Nourse at the Lamb opposite Catherine Street in the Strand. MDCCLVI.

1757. 2.—THE FATHER OF A FAMILY (A, 1, 27). A comedy acted for the first time at Venice during the carnival of 1750, by Charles

Goldoni, translated into English with the Italian original. London. Printed for J. Nourse at the Lamb opposite Catherine Street in the Strand. MDCCLVII.

1761. 3.—THE LIAR (A, 1, 35). Translated by Samuel Foote. Perf. 1761 (Maddalena in *Nota storica* to 35, vol. IV, Mun. of Ven.).

1785. 4.—CURIOSITY OR A PEEP THROUGH THE KEYHOLE (A, 1, 60). Title in *Biographia dramatica,* vol. II, p. 147: Maddalena, *Le Traduzioni del "Ventaglio,"* p. 73. Perf. Dublin, 1785. Not printed.

1805. 5.—THE SHE-INN-KEEPER OR THE LANDLADY (A, 1, 59). A Comedy by Master Charles Goldoni, a Venetian Lawyer. Translated from the Italian original By the scolar Mr. Gabriel Pinckerle, 1805, with the help of his Master Sir F. Mahait at Trieste (Venice, Bibl. Naz. di S. Marco, Ms. 6502, Cl. IX, Cod. CDLXXXI, LXXII, 9).

Text of transl. preceded by letter (Venice, Dec., 1883) by James Pinckerle, son of translator, in which, on occasion of unveiling of Gold.'s statue, he offers the library of Saint Mark two unpublished Mss., containing English versions of *La Locandiera* (59) and *Il Matrimonio per concorso* (142) translated from the original texts in the years 1805 and 1806 (Maddalena, *La Fortuna della "Locandiera,"* p. 728).

6.—AVARICE AND OSTENTATION (A, 1, 173). With Life of Goldoni and Remarks. In *The Theatrical Recorder,* by Thomas Holcroft. London, Paternoster Row, vol. I, 1805.

1814. 7.—THE WORD OF HONOR (A, 1, 144). Transl. by John Galt. In *The New British Theatre,* a selection of original dramas, not yet acted: with critical remarks by the editor. Vol. I, 1814. London, Henry Colburn, Hanover Square.

8.—LOVE, HONOR AND INTEREST (A, 1, 95). Transl. by John Galt, ibid., vol. III, 1814.

? 9.—THE SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS (A, 1, 16). "Le varie riduzioni del—16—" (Maddalena, *Le Traduzioni del "Ventaglio,"* p. 73).

1849. 10.—AN ODD MISTAKE (A, 1, 95). 11.—THE MOROSE GOOD MAN (A, 1, 172). In *Select Comedies.* D. Appleton & Co., New York, 1849.

Entered at library of British Museum as 11714.66.13; but Messrs. Appleton & Co., upon inquiry, write that they have no record of this publication.

1856. 12.—THE MISTRESS OF THE HOTEL (A, 1, 59). A Comedy in three acts by Carlo Goldoni. Translated from the Italian by Thomas Williams. London. Printed by R. S. Francis, Catherine Street, Strand, 1856. Transl. parallel with Italian text, and made for perf. of Sig.ª Ristori.

1892. 13.—A CURIOUS MISHAP (A, 1, 95). 14.—THE BENEFICENT BEAR (A, 1, 172). 15.—THE FAN (A, 1, 139). 16.—

THE SPENDTHRIFT MISER (A, 1, 173). The (*sic*) Comedies of Carlo Goldoni edited with an Introduction by Helen Zimmern. In *Collections of Masterpieces of Foreign Authors.* London, David Scott, 1892.

In answer to inquiry by Professor Maddalena, Helen Zimmern says: "I do not remember where I got those translations (See A, 5a: 10, 11, 6). I have a dim idea that I found them and revised them." Number 15 made from Ritter's "scelleratissima" German transl. (Maddalena, *Le Traduzioni del "Ventaglio,"* p. 69).

1894. 17.—THE HOSTESS (A, 1, 59). Perf. June 26, 1894, at the Avenue Theatre, London. It appears to be a transl. of the acting version used by Eleonora Duse.

1897. 18.—OUR HOSTESS (A, 1, 59). An English Version of Goldoni's *La Locandiera,* by A. O'D. Bartholeyns. Perf. at Theatre Royal, Kilburn, April 5th, 1897. Not printed.

1898. 19.—THE FAN (A, 1, 139). Unpublished transl. by Henry B. Fuller. Perf. by Anna Morgan's pupils, Grand Opera House, Chicago, 1898; and in 1909 by the Dramatic Club of the University of Chicago.

1899. 20.—MINE HOSTESS (A, 1, 59). A slightly adapted Translation by M. Davies Webster of Carlo Goldoni's Comedy *La Locandiera.* Produced June 12 and 13, 1899, under the stage direction of Mr. A. E. Drinkwater. Not printed. See Maddalena, *La Fortuna della "Locandiera,"* p. 747, who does not say where perf. was given.

1907. 21.—THE FAN (A, 1, 139). 22.—AN ODD MISUNDERSTANDING (A, 1, 95). 23.—THE BENEFICENT BEAR (A, 1, 172). Three Comedies by Goldoni—Three Tragedies by Vittorio Alfieri. Translated by Charles Lloyd. In *The Literature of Italy, 1265–1907,* 16 vols., not numbered. The National Alumni.

1910. 24.—MIRANDOLINA (A, 1, 59). Transl. by Lady Gregory, and perf. Feb. 24, 1910, Dublin (Maddalena, *Le Traduzioni del "Ventaglio,"* p. 73).

1911. 25.—IL VENTAGLIO—*THE FAN* (A, 1, 139). A Comedy in three acts by Carlo Goldoni, translated for The Yale University Dramatic Association by Kenneth McKenzie, Assistant Professor of Italian in Yale University. With an Introduction. New Haven, Conn., 1911.

1912. 26.—THE MISTRESS OF THE INN (A, 1, 59). Translated by Mr. Merle Pierson. Wisconsin Dramatic Society. Madison, 1912.

La Locandiera has been translated about 30 times and into 13 different languages.

27.—THE COFFEE HOUSE (A, 1, 34). Unpublished transl. by Henry B. Fuller. Perf. by The Drama Players, Chicago, 1912.

28.—IL VENTAGLIO—*THE FAN* (A, 1, 139). Unpublished transl. by Stark Young, Adjunct Professor of General Literature in the University of Texas. Perf. by The Curtain Club, University of Texas, Feb. 19, 1912.

(b) BOOKS FOR LIGHT OPERA.

1767. 1.—THE ACCOMPLISHED MAID (A, 2, 60?). A comic opera, as performed at Covent Garden. Translated by Edw. Toms. London, 1767. W. Griffin, Catherine Street, Strand.

2.—LA BUONA FIGLIUOLA (A, 2, 60). A comic opera, as performed at the Hay-Market. Altered by G. G. Bottarelli. London, 3d ed., 1767, ibid.

3.—LA BUONA FIGLIUOLA MARITATA (A, 2, 77). A comic opera, being the second part of *La Buona figliuola.* Altered by G. G. Bottarelli (It. & Engl.). London, 1767, ibid.

1768. 4.—I VIAGGIATORI RIDICOLI TORNATI IN ITALIA—THE RIDICULOUS TRAVELLERS RETURN'D TO ITALY (A, 2, 57?, 62?). Translated and altered by G. G. Bottarelli (It. & Engl.). London, 1768, ibid.

1771. 5.—THE COQUET (A, 2, 84?). A musical entertainment sung at Marybone Gardens; translated from the Italian of Signor Goldoni, and adapted to the original music of Signor Galuppi, by Mr. Stephen Storace. London, 1771. Printed for C. D. Piguenit in Norris Street.

1772. 6.—I VIAGGIATORI TORNATI IN ITALIA—THE TRAVELLERS RETURN'D TO ITALY (A, 2, 57?, 62?). As performed at the King's Theatre in the Hay market. Plan by Goldoni, but the poetry is quite new, or altered by G. G. Bottarelli. London, 1772, W. Griffin, Catherine Street, Strand. Appears to be another ed. of 4.

1786. 7.—GERMONDO (A, 2, 19). By Carlo Goldoni; a new serious opera in 3 acts. Translation in prose by F. Bottarelli (It. & Engl.). London, 1786, T. Cadell.

1810. 8.—LA BUONA FIGLIUOLA, OR THE GOOD-NATURED GIRL (A, 2, 60). In 2 acts. Music by Piccini. London, 1810. Printed by Bretell & Co., Marshall St., Golden Sq., & sold at the Opera House & no where else.

1911. 9.—THE INQUISITIVE WOMEN (A, 1, 60). In G. Schirmer's *Collection of Opera-Librettos.* English version by A. J. du P. Coleman. Music by Ermanno Wolf-Ferrari. New York, 1911.

The Serenade, by Harry B. Smith (music by Victor Herbert), announced at time of production as a musical version of a comedy by Goldoni, is, as the author informed Mr. Chatfield-Taylor, entirely his own, Goldoni's name having been used as a hoax.

(c) GOLDONI'S MEMOIRS.

1814. MEMOIRS OF GOLDONI. Written by himself and forming a complete history of his Life and Writings. Translated from the original French by John Black. London, 2 vols., 1814.

1828. The same, in vol. XXIII (2 vols.) of *A Collection of the most instructive and amusing Lives ever published.* London, 1828.

1877. The same; abridged. With an Essay by W. D. Howells. One vol. Boston, 1877.

APPENDIX B

BIOGRAPHICAL CHRONOLOGY

1707, Feb. 25.	Birth in Venice of Carlo Goldoni, son of Giulio Goldoni and Margherita (Salvioni).
1712, Jan. 10.	Birth of Goldoni's brother, Giampaolo.
1712 (?).	Death of Goldoni's grandfather (See pp. 11–12).
1714.	His father leaves for Rome to study medicine.
1718.	His father obtains the doctorate and settles in Perugia with family.
1719, after May.	Goldoni enters the Jesuit college at Perugia.
Summer.	Acts female rôle in *La Sorellina di Don Pilone,* by Gigli.
1720.	Goldoni family leaves Perugia for Chioggia, and passing through Rimini, the dramatist is left there to study philosophy under Candini. Has the small-pox.
1721, March 17.	Date of letter from Rimini notifying Goldoni's father that his son has decamped with Florindo's troupe.
1721–22, Winter and Spring.	Goldoni accompanies his father on medical rounds. Has love adventure with one of his father's patients.
1722, Spring and Summer.	In Venice as fourth apprentice to his uncle Indric, a lawyer.
Sep. 25.	Date of patent of Marquis Ghislieri whereby Gold. is enabled to enter Ghislieri College at Pavia.
Autumn.	Travels with father from Chioggia to Rovigo, Ferrara, Modena, Piacenza, Milan, and Pavia.
Nov. 26.	Patent of admission to the college presented.
Dec. 25.	Goldoni receives the tonsure.
1723, Jan. 5.	Enters the Ghislieri College.
July.	Goldoni goes home to Chioggia by water, and there reads Machiavelli's *Mandragola.*
Sep.	On return journey to Pavia he stops at Piacenza, where he visits the Councillor Barilli, who pays him a debt owing to his father as the heir of Carlo Alessandro Goldoni.
Dec.	Spends Christmas vacation with Marquis Goldoni-Vidoni.
1724, Summer.	Returns to Chioggia for second summer vacation. Composes panegyric in praise of San Francesco d'Assisi. Spends last days of vacation with Marquis Goldoni at Milan.
1725, May.	Goldoni expelled from Ghislieri College for writing *Il Colosso,* and he returns to Chioggia accompanied by a hypocritical friar.

1725, Summer.	Goes with his father to Udine, where he resumes the study of law under famous jurisconsult Movelli.
1726, Spring.	Writes sonnets embodying Lenten sermons delivered by the R. P. Giacomo Catteneo. Is tricked in amorous adventure by a lady's maid.
Summer-Autumn.	Accompanies his father to Görz, where he stays five months, and to Wippach; visits Gratz, Trieste, and other towns. Returns to Chioggia.
Winter.	He is sent to Modena to study law.
1727.	At Modena, Venice, and Chioggia.
1728, Jan.	Appointed Supernumerary to Coadjutor in the criminal chancelry of Chioggia.
1729, May 20.	Becomes "Coadjutore nella Cancelleria Criminale" at Feltre, in which position he stays sixteen months.
1730, Autumn.	Goldoni leaves Feltre for Venice and Ferrara, and joins his parents at Bagnacavallo. His father dies there.
1731, Jan. 29.	Date of death certificate of Gold.'s father.
April.	Goldoni resumes study of law with Gio. Francesco Radi as his tutor.
Oct. 22.	Obtains degree of Doctor of Law at Padua.
1732, May 20.	Is admitted to the Venetian bar.
Dec.	He flees from Venice to escape the difficulties of a love affair. Embarks for Padua, making short stays in Vicenza, Verona, and Brescia. His mother goes to Modena to live.
1733, Jan.–Feb.	At Bergamo, where he stays at house of Bonfadini, his former Podestà at Feltre.
Feb. 11.	At Milan. Reads *Amalasunta* to Count Prata of the Milan Opera, and burns it after it is refused. Is appointed the morning following "gentilhomme de chambre" to Orazio Bartolini, the Venetian Minister Resident.
Oct. 1.	Bartolini leaves Milan, and during his absence Goldoni meets a woman, known as Margherita Biondi, with whom he has love affair.
Oct. 20.	Bartolini returns to Milan.
Nov. 3.	The Sardinians and French enter Milan.
Nov. 5.	Siege of Citadel of Milan begins.
Nov. 7.	Goldoni retires to Crema with Bartolini, whose secretary he becomes.
Nov. 17.	Assault of Pizzighettone.
1734, June 26.	Goldoni loses his diplomatic position and leaves Crema.
June 28.	Arrives in Parma.
June 29.	Battle of Parma.
July 2.	Goldoni starts for Brescia and is robbed by Austrian deserters, who leave him only a copy of *Belisario*. Arrives the same day at Casal Pusterlengo, and reads *Belisario* to parish priest.
July–Aug.	Arrives at Brescia, where he meets Scacciati and La Biondi. Borrows money from the former

	and proceeds to Verona, where he is engaged as playwright by Imer of the San Samuele theatre of Venice.
1734, Sep.	Leaves Verona with Imer's troupe for Venice.
Oct.	In Venice. Beginning of his connection as a professional dramatist with the theatres of the Grimani family, viz. the San Samuele and the San Gio. Crisostomo.
1735, Spring.	At Padua with Imer's troupe.
Summer.	At Udine. La Ferramonti dies there. Goldoni's mother returns to Venice from Modena (See Dec., 1732).
Sep.	Again in Venice. Love affair with La Passalacqua, whose faithlessness he dramatizes in *Don Giovanni Tenorio.*
1736. Spring.	Michele Grimani makes Goldoni directing playwright of the San Gio. Crisostomo theatre in Venice. Goldoni follows Imer to Genoa, where he meets Nicoletta Connio.
Aug. 22.	Date of marriage contract between Goldoni and Nicoletta Connio (Born in 1717).
Aug. 23.	Goldoni's wedding. Is again seized with smallpox.
Oct. 9.	Arrives in Venice with bride.
1737 (1738?), Spring–Summer.	Visits Modena with his wife, returning to Venice before Aut.
1740, Aug. 3.	Count Antonio Tuvo, Genoese consul in Venice, dies.
Dec. 12.	Goldoni appointed to his post.
1741, Jan. 2 & 19.	His exequatur approved by governments of Genoa and Venice respectively.
Nov.	His lawsuit on behalf of a Genoese senator, and unfortunate dealing with broker.
1743, March 9.	According to last document known to have been written by Goldoni as Genoese consul, three months' leave of absence given Goldoni by government of Genoa, intended by him to be used to regain income of his patrimony at Modena, and to persuade Genoese government to pay him for his services. He puts off departure, however, because of
May 19.	Death of Anna Baccherini, the soubrette for whom he wrote *La Donna di garbo,* and because of return of his brother Giampaolo, who
May–June.	Introduces to him a Ragusan captain, masquerading as a recruiting colonel, who swindles Goldoni. Starts on journey to Genoa, but there is no evidence that he reached that city.
June.	At Bologna with his wife.
July 16.	At Rimini (Acts as godfather there to child of Angela Bartozzi).
Oct.	Austrians move on Rimini, and Duke of Modena evacuates same. Goldoni leaves for Pesaro.
Oct. 25.	Austrians enter Rimini.
1743, Oct. 29.	Austrians at Cattolica. Goldoni's luggage captured.

1743,	Nov.	Goldoni returns to Rimini.
1744,	Jan. or Feb.	He resigns consulship.
	Lent.	Austrians take the offensive. Goldoni leaves for Florence.
	April–July.	In Florence.
	Aug. 15.	Assumption day at Sienna. Hears Perfetti improvise at Academy of Intronati.
	Summer.	Visits Pisa, where he is received among the local Arcadians (*Colonia Alfea*).
	Sep.	Begins the practice of law in Pisa.
1745.		Cesare D'Arbes, a member of the Medebac troupe, then at Leghorn, visits Goldoni at Pisa, and asks him for a play.
	Aug. 13.	Goldoni sends D'Arbes a sonnet to be recited at perf. of *Tonin bella grazia.*
1746.		Goes to Florence on business.
	May 3.	Day of the "Invenzione della Croce": he is at Lucca.
1747,	Spring.	Goes to Leghorn and meets Girolamo Medebac.
	Sep.	Signs provisional agreement with him.
1748,	shortly after April 14.	Goldoni leaves Pisa; goes to Florence, thence to Bologna and Mantua, where he arrives at end of April, staying a month in Mantua.
	June.	He journeys to Modena, where Medebac joins him the latter part of July.
	Aug.	Goes to Venice.
	Oct.	Goldoni's first season at the Sant' Angelo theatre opens.
1749,	March 10.	He signs a four years' contract with Medebac.
	Nov. 17.	Dramatic censorship established by Venetian government.
1750,	Feb. 10.	Announces intention to write sixteen comedies for the following season.
	Spring.	Goldoni accompanies Medebac's players to Bologna (where he is April 18), and Mantua, length of stay in these two places being five months.
	Summer	Is in Milan.
	Oct. 5.	Third season at the Sant' Angelo opens with *Il Teatro comico.*
1751,	Feb.	Medebac permits Goldoni to print his plays at the rate of one volume a year.
	Easter.	Follows Medebac to Turin.
	After May 29.	Goes to Genoa and Milan.
	Oct. 4.	Opening of Goldoni's fourth season at the Sant' Angelo.
1752,	April 17.	Wedding of Giovanni Mocenigo and Catterina Loredan, niece of the Doge Francesco Loredan, Goldoni attending the wedding supper at the Ducal Palace two days after.
	Middle of May.	Joins the Medebac players in Bologna, where he makes the acquaintance of Senator Francesco Albergati-Capacelli.
	Oct.	First negotiations with Vendramin (Antonio).
	Christmas.	Announces that he will sever his relations with Medebac at termination of contract.

1753, Feb. 15.	First contract with San Luca theatre, signed by Antonio Vendramin.
March 6.	Contract with Medebac expires.
April 28.	Date of manifesto (*Lettera dell' avvocato Carlo Goldoni ad un suo amico in Venezia*), published by Goldoni in Florence, in which the Paperini ed. of his dramatic works is announced.
Oct. 7.	Opening of Goldoni's first season at San Luca theatre.
Oct. 10.	Date of Ducal Privilege to print Paperini ed.
1754, March.	Goldoni's brother, Giampaolo, comes to Venice with his two children.
May, or June.	Journeys to Modena with his entire family, where he falls ill of pneumonia. After his recovery he goes to Milan (Writes from Milan to Giovan Marco Pitteri on July 17), where he joins his players. His "vapors" attack him again, being aggravated by the death of the actor Angeleri on July 16.
Sep. 14.	Is again in Venice.
Oct. 7.	Second season at San Luca opens.
Nov. 7.	Death of Goldoni's mother.
1755, March.	Makes contract for Pitteri ed. of his dramatic works.
After April 26.	Leaves Venice to join his players in Bologna. On the way thither he is stopped, near Ferrara, by a customs officer, who, upon recognizing the playwright, intercedes successfully with his chief for the passage of Goldoni's contraband.
Aug. 2 and 23.	In Venice. Thence he goes to Bagnoli to visit Count Widiman.
End of Sep.	Returns to Venice.
Oct. 6.	Third season at San Luca opens.
1756, March.	At the invitation of Philip of Bourbon, Duke of Parma and Piacenza, Goldoni goes to Parma and to the ducal country seat, Colorno, Philip rewarding him with the title of Court Poet and an annual pension of 3000 lire (Parmesan).
Oct. 4.	Fourth season at San Luca opens.
Oct. 9.	Date of letter to Arconati-Visconti, showing Goldoni had returned to Venice.
Oct. 14.	Goldoni's second contract with Vendramin (Francesco).
Dec.	Second journey to the court of Parma.
Dec. 14.	Date of letter to Arconati-Visconti, showing Goldoni was then at Parma. He stays there until March, 1757.
1757, after March 1.	He meets Madame du Boccage in Venice.
Summer.	At Zola, near Bologna, summer estate of Marquis Albergati-Capacelli.
Oct. 3.	Fifth season at San Luca opens.
1758, Lent.	Goldoni receives an invitation from the proprietor of the Tordinona theatre in Rome to write

	plays for that playhouse and oversee their production in person.
1758, Nov. 23.	Starts on his journey to Rome.
Middle of Dec.	Arrives in Rome, and lodges in the house of Pietro Poloni, in the via Condotti.
1759, July 2 or 3.	Leaves Rome.
July 17.	Is in Bologna.
Sep. 11.	Is still in Bologna. (Mantovani, p. 148.)
Oct. 13.	Writes to "N. N." that he had spent two months and a half in Bologna (Masi, *Lettere,* p. 130).
Aut.	First negotiations with the comédiens du Roi de la troupe italienne.
1761, Jan. 25.	Carlo Gozzi's *L'Amore delle tre melarancie* first perf. in Venice.
Feb. 4.	Goldoni receives consent of the "Riformatori" to publish the Pasquali ed., and subsequently, at a Lenten banquet in Venice, he obtains 180 subscriptions.
Lent.	The French ambassador gives Goldoni a letter from Zanuzzi, offering him in the name of the Directeur des Spectacles a two-years' engagement in Paris.
Sep. 5.	Date of letter accepting Parisian engagement.
1762. Feb. 23.	Perf. of *Una delle ultime sere di carnovale,* in which Goldoni bids farewell to the Venetian public.
March 2.	Third contract with Vendramin (Francesco).
April 15.	Goldoni leaves Venice forever.
May 8–29.	Is ill at Bologna.
June.	Stops at Modena. And at Reggio (June 26), to visit Paradisi.
July 2.	At Parma, where he stops for a week, and makes peace with Frugoni.
July.	At Corte Maggiore, visiting Princess Henrietta of Modena. Then at Piacenza for four days with the Marquis Casati.
July 24.	In Genoa with his wife's relatives for a week.
July–Aug.	Journeying via Antibes, Nice, Marseille, and Lyon to Paris.
Aug. 26.	Arrival in Paris. Takes lodgings in apartment near Comédie Italienne.
Sep. 1.	Goldoni assumes his post at the Théâtre Italien (Spinelli, *Fogli sparsi.* p. 62), but asks for four months' time "to examine the taste of the public."
Sep. 5.	*Il Figlio d'Arlecchino perduto e ritrovato* played at Fontainebleau, where Goldoni passes a week.
1763, end of Jan.	Moves to the Rue Richelieu, beside Café de Foy.
March.	Sees French opera for the first time. Dines with Madame du Boccage.
Oct. 19.	Is sued for seduction by Catherine Lefèbvre (Lefébure), alias Méry.
1764, March 19.	Writes to Albergati concerning Comédie Italienne, saying: "I can certainly not stay in Paris; I should lose my reputation."

1764, April 16.	Writes to Albergati that the actors of the Comédie Italienne were forcing him to leave Paris; but that the Gentlemen of the Chamber have made compromise whereby he is under ægis of the court, and independent of the actors.
1765, Feb. 24.	Writes to Gabriel Cornet that he has been appointed to teach Italian to Madame Adélaïde, though still under obligation to write for Comédie Italienne until Easter.
Before May 3.	Is given apartment in the Château de Versailles.
May 3–Oct. 8.	At Marly, Compiègne, Chantilly, Fontainebleau, and Versailles.
Dec. 20.	Death of Dauphin. Goldoni in Versailles.
1767, March 13.	Death of Dauphine Marie Josèphe de Saxe.
1768, May 15.	Corsica annexed, though not effectively taken possession of until after battle of Pontenuovo, May 9, 1769: Goldoni obtains for his nephew the post of interpreter in newly created Corsican bureau, he having previously secured for the nephew the professorship of Italian in the Ecole Royale Militaire.
June 24.	Death of the Queen of France, Maria Lecinska.
1769, before Jan. 12.	Mesdames de France obtain for Goldoni an annual pension of 4000 livres.
End of 1769–beginning of 1770.	Goldoni invited to London to write for Haymarket theatre. Declines.
1770, May 16.	Marriage of Marie Antoinette with Dauphin of France.
1771, Nov. 4.	Perf. in Paris of *Le Bourru bienfaisant.*
Nov. 5.	Idem at Fontainebleau.
1774, May 10.	Death of Louis XV.
Summer.	Goldoni at Choisy-le-Roy, where the daughters of Louis XV are recuperating.
1775, Feb.	Goldoni called to teach Italian to Madame Clotilde, sister of Louis XVI, who is to marry the Prince of Piedmont.
June 11.	Coronation at Reims of King Louis XVI.
1777.	A troupe of Italian buffi arrive in Paris. Goldoni disappointed in not being invited to rewrite their libretti.
1778, Feb. 10.	Voltaire returns to Paris.
Feb. 17.	Goldoni visits him. (Maddalena, *Bricciche goldoniane: La Visita al Voltaire.*)
1779, Dec. 25.	Decree issued abolishing Comédie Italienne, to take effect at Easter.
1780.	Goldoni retires from the court, and settles in Paris.
1781, Oct. 30.	Marriage of his niece, Petronilla Margherita Goldoni, to Giovanni Antonio Chiaruzzi.
1783.	Goldoni plans a "Journal de correspondance italienne et française." The plan fails.
1785, May 24.	Failure of perf. in French of *Un Curioso accidente* (*La Dupe de soi-même*). (Grimm, *Correspondance*, Entry of June, 1785.)
— —	Illness of Goldoni's wife.

1787.	Visits of Alfieri and Moratín to Goldoni.
1788, Oct. 20.	The Comédie Française pays Goldoni 600 livres.
1792, Jan. 30.	Goldoni cedes all rights in *Le Bourru bienfaisant* to the Comédie Française.
Feb. 6.	Goldoni's nephew given the entrée of Comédie Française as long as *Le Bourru bienfaisant* continues in its repertory.
1793, Feb. 6.	Death of Carlo Goldoni at six o'clock in the evening, at age of eighty-six, at his home in the rue Pavée Saint-Sauveur, No. 1.
1793. Feb. 7.	The *Convention nationale,* unaware of Goldoni's demise, and on motion of Marie-Joseph Chénier, decrees to restore to Goldoni his pension of 4000 livres a year, and to pay on his demand what is due him of the pension since July, 1792.
Feb. 10.	Chénier obtains from the *Convention nationale* a pension of 1500 livres for Goldoni's widow.
June 18.	Benefit perf. of *Le Bourru bienfaisant,* ordered and attended by the *Convention nationale,* which nets 1859 livres and 15 sous, this sum being paid to Goldoni's nephew for the widow.

APPENDIX C

BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography, while presenting the titles of the books and articles quoted, referred to, or specially consulted in the preparation of the present volume, contains as well the titles of additional works of literary or historical significance that should come within the knowledge of the student of Goldoni. It makes mention, however, of only those general histories of Italian literature which have been actually consulted, and excludes the mass of occasional and other verse, and the addresses, printed in 1907, on the occasion of the second centenary of Goldoni's birth, as well as the plays by Paolo Ferrari and other Italians in which Goldoni figures as a character. For supplementary material, or for arrangements of it under specialized heads, the reader is referred to the bibliographies of A. G. Spinelli (1884), Charles Rabany (*Sources bibliographiques* in his *Carlo Goldoni, etc.,* 1896), D'Ancona and Bacci (Vol. IV, 1906, and Vol. VI: *Supplemento bibliografico,* 1904, of their *Manuale della letteratura italiana*), Cesare Levi (1907), and A. Della Torre (1908).

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III. *L'Episodio goldoniano delle sedici commedie nuove.* Vittorio Malamani.
IV. *Il Gergo dei barcaiuoli veneziani e Carlo Goldoni.* Cesare Musatti.
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1793–98. Venice, Garbo. 14 vols.
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1823–27. Venice, Girolamo Tasso. 45 vols., with *Vita di Carlo Goldoni* by Luigi Carrer, in 3 vols., 1824.
1827. Prato: *Collezione completa delle commedie.* 50 vols.: 17 vols. for the librettos, 3 for the Memoirs, and the rest for the plays.
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COLLECTIONS AND ONE-PLAY EDITIONS.

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1785. *Recueil des pièces de théâtre lues par Mr. le Texier en sa maison Lisle Street, Leicester Fields.* London, T. Hookham, Bond Street. Vol. IV contains 172.

1797. *Il Teatro moderno.* Venice. Vol. XV (1797) contains 59, vol. XXIV (1798) has 172, and vol. XXXV (1799) has 130.

1800. *Teatro italiano, raccolta da L. Nardini.* London, Dulan & Co., Broad St., Golden Sq. Vol. II contains 130, 142, and 96.

1800. *Les chef-d'œuvres dramatiques de Charles Goldoni, traduits pour la première fois en français avec le texte italien à côté de la traduction, un discours préliminaire, des notes et une analyse raisonnée de chaque pièce.* Par M. A. A(mar). D(u). R(ivier). Lyons and Paris, 3 vols. Contains: 38, 126, 114, 48, 88, 95, and 8.

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1820. *Compagno della mia grammatica.* Londra, B. & S. Gardiner. Contains 88.

1821. *Classici italiani.* Milan. *Commedie scelte di Carlo Goldoni.* Contains: Vol. I: *Vita di C. G.,* and 95, 41, 38, and 34; vol. II: 59, 26, 97, 45, and 74; vol. III: 143, 144, 145, 43, and 48; vol. IV: 84, 127, 128, 129, and 90.

1818. *La Moglie saggia* (52). John Stokes, printer, London.

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1824. Bellingeri: *Scelta di alcune commedie del Goldoni.* Paris, Fayolle.

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1828. Montucci, A.: *Scelta completa di tutte le migliori commedie di Carlo Goldoni, per uso della studiosa gioventù oltramontana.* Leipzig, 2 vols.

1829. *Teatro classico italiano antico e moderno, ovvero: Il Parnasso teatrale. Introduzione del Prof. F. Salfi.* Leipzig. Contains: 76, 59, and 126.

1831. *Scelta di alcune commedie del Goldoni.* Paris, Fayolle, 11th ed. See 1824.

1837. *Teatro scelto italiano, con note biografiche da A. Ronna.* Paris. Contains 172.

1838. *La France dramatique au XIX^e^ siècle.* Paris. Vol. II contains 172.

1847. Gherardini: *Scelta di commedie del Goldoni, colla vita dell' autore scritta da —.* Paris, 14th ed.

1852. *Scelta di alcune commedie dell' Avvocato C. Goldoni.* Florence, G. Moro.
1856. Raffaello Nocchi: *Commedie scelte di Carlo Goldoni pubblicate per cura di—.* Florence, 1906 (1st ed. in 1856). Contains: 95, 74, 125, 34, 59, 172, and 120.
1857. F. Cameroni: *Capolavori di Carlo Goldoni. Illustrati da G. Prosdocimi.* Trieste, 2 vols. Contains 60 plays.
1858. *Selections from Italian Authors.* Edinburg and London. Contains 172 and 139.
1890. Rev. A. C. Clapin, M.A.: 59, 41, and 172, with notes and vocabulary. In the *Biblioteca italiana,* Librairie Hachette, London, Paris, Boston.
1891. *Teatro scelto di Carlo Goldoni, illustrato da Giacomo Mantegazza.* Milan.
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1897. Ernesto Masi: *Scelta di commedie di Carlo Goldoni.* Florence, 2 vols. Vol. I contains 26, 43, 33, 34, and 60; vol. II: 120, 125, 123, 139, 143, and 172. The general preface and the *Nota preliminare* to each play are important.
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1904. A. Mondino: *"La Famiglia dell' antiquario" di C. G. con note di—.* Leghorn.
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Zorzetto, in *The Public Square,* 462-463.

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